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BAY AREA REPORTER

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Tenderloin nonprofits fight over homeless contract

by Matthew S. Bajko

Two Tenderloin nonprofits find themselves embroiled in a political fight over a contract to operate a center to serve the neighborhood's homeless population.

At issue is a move by Supervisor Chris Daly to secure funding for Central City Hospitality House's Tenderloin Self-Help Center after city officials decided to turn over the contract to the Tenderloin AIDS Resource Center.

At the December 14 supervisors meeting it was announced that additional resources were located in the Mayor's Budget Office and that Mayor Gavin Newsom was restoring \$6 million in services that were to be eliminated effective January 15, 2005. Included in the restorations was \$850,000 for the Department of Human Services to support homeless services in the Tenderloin over the next 18 months. The resources were to support a contract with TARC for an expanded homeless drop-in center program.

However, the supervisors passed an ordinance at first reading to de-appropriate funding for the DHS contract and re-appropriate those funds to the Department of Public Health. TARC alleges that the intent of the legislation, sponsored by Daly, was to ensure that Central City Hospitality House's Self-Help Center would be provided resources to continue services, even though the agency had failed to merit renewal as the provider of the services in the recent competitive bidding process.

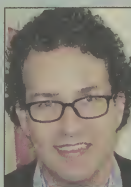
"We are concerned that the supervisors moved to divert resources away from the legitimately selected grantee. We find this behavior unfair and biased and we question its legality," said TARC Executive Director Tracy Brown.

But Brown hastened to add that his agency's objections over Daly's move are not meant as an objection to Central City Hospitality House programming. Instead, he said TARC has argued that funding be found for both agencies' programs.

"It should not be at the expense of our legitimately selected project. Our community needs all the help it can get," said Brown.

Jackie Jenks, executive director of Hospitality House, said her agency is

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Tracy Brown

Both sides spar in same-sex marriage case

by Matthew S. Bajko

City Attorney Dennis Herrera, at podium, takes questions from reporters Wednesday along with the rest of the legal team representing the gay and lesbian couples.



Rick Gerhardt

Over two days of oral arguments last week in six consolidated court cases dealing with the state's ban on gay marriage, San Francisco Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer gave only one clear indication about his ruling: it would immediately be appealed to the state's appeals court.

"I intend to end all of these cases and package them to go up to the Court of Appeals," Kramer told a packed courtroom on the morning of Wednesday, December 22.

Though how the judge said he views the legal question at the heart of the cases could prove promising for the 14 same-sex couples represented in two cases and San Francisco officials, all of whom are asking the court to find the state's laws defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman unconstitutional.

"It's not what marriage is about, it's who gets to participate that is what this case is all

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Gay couples find pride in court proceedings

by Matthew S. Bajko

Despite hearing their opponents' contention that they do not deserve the right to marry, members of 11 gay and lesbian couples who listened to the first day of oral arguments in the same-sex marriage cases on Wednesday, December 22 called the hearing a proud moment.

"I am very proud to be an American today," said Diane Sabin, who with her partner Jewelle Gomez, are suing the state of California for the right to wed.

Joshua Rymer also said he felt proud to be present last week.

"I feel enormous pride to be part of this piece of history," said Rymer. Rymer and his partner, Tim Frazer, are also parties to the case.

Robin Tyler and her partner, Diane Olson, came up from Los Angeles to witness the proceedings and to deliver a message to Mayor Gavin Newsom, whose decision last February 12 to order city officials to marry same-sex couples spurred the legal actions now before San Francisco Superior Court.

"God bless Gavin Newsom. We want to name our first born after Gavin," said Tyler.

Tyler and Olson, along with the Reverend Troy Perry and his partner, Phillip Ray DeBlicke, filed a separate suit against the state after being denied marriage licenses in Beverly Hills last February 12. Their case was later consolidated with lawsuits filed by the city of San Francisco and 12 other same-sex couples that all seek to have California's marriage laws declared unconstitutional for discriminating against gays and lesbians. Two other suits filed by antigay groups seeking to uphold the marriage statutes were also consolidated with the other cases. A sixth case was filed on behalf of gay couples whose mar-



Partners Diane Olson, left, and Robin Tyler prepare to talk with reporters following the first day of arguments in the same-sex marriage case.

Rick Gerhardt

riages were ruled nonbinding by the court and are seeking damages.

Olson comes from a family with deep roots in the fight for equality and civil rights. Her great-grandmother took part in the campaign for women's suffrage and eventually became the first female elected official in Utah. Her grandfather, Culbert Olson, became California's first elected Democratic governor in 1938.

Tyler is a nationally known lesbian rights activist and co-chair of DontAmend.com, part of the successful campaign to defeat a federal constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage.

"I am so tired of being told our love is worth less," she said.

After hearing the city's lawyers and attorneys for the gay couples opening remarks, Tyler sounded optimistic about the case.

"Our side had brilliant arguments. I think it is going well," she said.

Perry, who married DeBlicke in Canada, said he wanted his marriage recognized in the United States for two reasons.

"I want to get married because it's a moral thing for me to do. Also, I am very concerned because my partner is an AIDS patient," said Perry. "He has been HIV-positive 18 years

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Gwen Araujo trial set tone for community

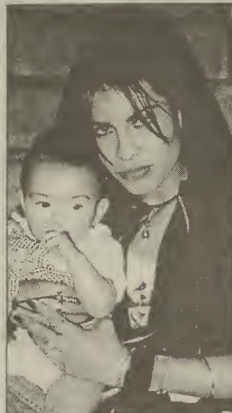
by Zak Szymanski

Sexual deception" was the theme put forth by defense attorneys in the 2004 trial for the three men accused of murdering transgender teenager Gwen Araujo.

The phrase — a recognizably transphobic remark — went largely unchallenged by the prosecution, which chose to acknowledge that heterosexual men should indeed have a reaction to discovering that their female friend was biologically male.

It was the severity of that reaction that Alameda County Deputy District Attorney Chris Lamiero chose to argue in the case for first-degree murder convictions for Michael Magidson, Jose Merel, and Jason Cazares, all of whom admitted to participating in some way in Araujo's killing in October 2002. But that case fell flat in the presence of testimony from professional psychologists who painted the defendants as immature, sexually confused men prone to emotionally-driven reactions typical of second-degree murder or manslaughter crimes.

In the end, jury members deadlocked on first-degree murder charges for all three men, which rendered them unable to debate the lesser charges. A mistrial was declared on June 22, prompting LGBT and ally anger worldwide. In San Francisco, a rally was held in the Castro denouncing the lack of a verdict. Supervisor Tom Ammiano followed up by introducing a resolution condemning the trial's outcome and the use of transphobic tactics.



Gwen Araujo in a family photo

The facts of the case are largely undisputed: Araujo, 17, was born as a male named Eddie but had lived as a woman in her East Bay town of Newark since the age of 14. In the summer of 2002, she met a group of young men including the defendants, and spent many nights hanging out at the Merel home, where she reportedly engaged in sexual relations with both Merel and Magidson. Days and perhaps weeks of speculation about Araujo's biological sex included comments from the men about "killing" anyone who would dare to "deceive" them about who they slept with, according to witness testimony. On the night of October 3, 2002, the men decided to act on their suspicions, sexually assaulting Araujo (or, in the words of all attorneys, "confronting" her) to reveal male anatomy, an image that allegedly fueled the fire of an already-charged scene. Araujo was

beaten, kicked, hit in the head with a frying pan, strangled, and tied up while the men reportedly made trips for shovels to bury her and cleaned the bloodstains from the home. Her body was driven to the Sierra foothills and exhumed by police several days later.

Many factors probably contributed to last summer's mistrial. A true timeline was not established by prosecution witnesses — including the doctor who performed the autopsy, who could not confirm whether Araujo's two significant injuries occurred within minutes or hours of each other — leaving in question whether there was actual premeditation (first-degree murder) or a flurry of irrational events. A combined trial of three separate men with possibly very different roles in the crime asked the jury to find all three men equally guilty, perhaps leading to confusion.

But the hung jury could also be attributed to a lack of knowledge about transgender issues: defense attorneys called in gay men to testify that the defendants were not homophobic, equating the trans and gay identities and experiences. The defense also was able to drill the phrase "deception" over and over again into the jury without so much as an objection. And the prosecution as well as some mainstream media outlets frequently used Araujo's birth name and male pronouns.

The blatant and permissible transphobia convinced Araujo's family to pursue on Gwen's behalf a posthumous name change so that there could be no more excuses for dishonoring her identity. Gwen's legal name change was granted just days after the mistrial was declared.

The tactics provided an opportunity

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DP law takes effect January 1

by Zak Szymanski

A California appeals court on December 21 denied a request by antigay groups for an emergency stay of AB205 – the state's Domestic Partners Rights and Responsibilities Act – clearing the way for January 1 to mark the implementation of the most comprehensive domestic partnership law in the country.

The court did allow for the legal challenges to the law to continue – the Campaign for California Families and the Proposition 22 Legal Defense and Education Fund are appealing a Superior Court judge's September ruling that AB205 does not violate a state law limiting marriage to a man and a woman – but ordered an expedited schedule so that the briefing will be complete by the end of January.

"We're grateful that the law will go fully into effect on January 1, 2005, and tens of thousands of California families will begin to enjoy the protections provided by AB205," said Geoffrey Kors, executive director of the LGBT political group Equality California. "AB205 is a big step in the right direction, but lesbian and gay Californians will only have true equality once the state allows same-sex couples to marry."

When the new year begins, partners already registered with

the state will automatically be entitled and subject to nearly all the same state rights and responsibilities as married spouses. All couples who register after January 1 will also receive the same automatic privileges, including the right to own community property, the right to inherit a partner's property even if he or she does not leave a will, and automatic legal guardianship of children born into a domestic partnership.

Registered domestic partners also may visit each other in the hospital, make medical decisions for each other, and make funeral decisions in the event of one person's death. AB205 does not automatically provide health insurance coverage, except for state employees. However, a separate law, AB2208, the California Insurance Equality Act, also goes into effect in January and requires that all insurance plans regulated by the state must treat registered domestic partners and heterosexual spouses equally. This means that an employer who offers health insurance to spouses must also offer it to registered domestic partners.

For many marriage-minded folks, registering as domestic partners makes sense. The protections afforded to same-sex households and their families are usually worth the added responsibilities, including automatic inheritance of a partner's debts, and a potential obligation to pay child sup-

port in the event of a dissolution.

But the law comes with possible pitfalls as well, noted LGBT advocates, particularly because it recognizes domestic partners when it comes to certain spousal duties and obligations without conferring over 1,000 rights that come with federally recognized marriage.

Couples who should be particularly cautious before registering, according to a document released by EQCA and the National Center for Lesbian Rights, include binational couples, couples in which one or both of the partners are receiving public benefits, and couples where one or both partners are in the military. Anyone who is likely to be harmed by being "outed" should seek legal counsel before registering, the groups have advised. In the case of binational couples, for instance, registering will not allow a U.S. citizen to sponsor a partner for permanent residence, but it may be used as evidence of an intent to stay in the country permanently, which can interfere with non-immigrant visas.

Additionally, the California Department of Health and Human Services still has not determined whether registered partners will be counted as joint incomes when one person is applying for or enrolled in need-based assistance programs such as Medi-Cal, SSI,

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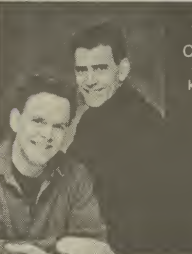
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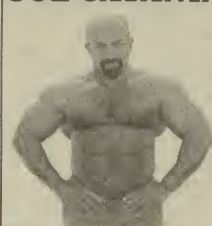
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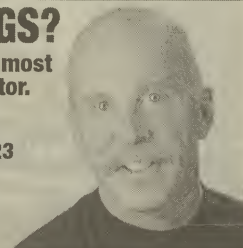
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Here's looking at local LGBT news of 2004

compiled by Cynthia Laird

San Francisco's foray into the battle over same-sex marriage easily was the top local LGBT story of the year. And while the legal maneuvers continue, it's time to take a look at the other news items — large and small — that made it into the pages of the *Bay Area Reporter* over the last year.



Plaintiff Alana Flores

January

LGBT students from the Morgan Hill Unified School District in the South Bay settled an antigay bias lawsuit for \$1.1 million on January 6 after a six-year legal battle. The settlement with plaintiffs **Alana Flores, Freddie Fuentes**, and four other students also included a groundbreaking set of school policy agreements.

The state parole board rejected parole for **Robert Rosenkrantz**, who was convicted for the 1985 murder of former schoolmate **Steve Redman**, who physically attacked Rosenkrantz and ousted him to his father the night of his high school graduation.

Marian Chapman, a pioneering family law attorney and longtime supporter of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, died January 2 in her Berkeley home after suffering a heart attack. She was 58.

Out lesbian **Heather Hiles** on January 12 was named to the San Francisco school board by Mayor **Gavin Newsom**.

February

LGBT Community Center Executive Director **Thom Lynch** announced in late January that the center plugged what had been a sinking fiscal mess. An audit showed a \$222,500 deficit, but Lynch said it was likely the center would raise enough money to balance its books.

Picking up on Board of Supervisors President **Matt Gonzalez's** effort in 2003 to get a memorial to the late Supervisor **Harvey Milk** installed in City Hall, a group of community members, including representatives of the San Francisco LGBT Pride Committee met February 2 to jump-start the project. The group's first fundraiser was held in the fall.

Dr. **John S. Greenspan** was named the new director of the University of California, San Francisco AIDS Research Institute and in a February 9 interview, challenged the Bush administration to fully fund the global fight against AIDS.

John Lipp was hired as executive director of Pets Are Wonderful Support.

After 18 months of legal wrangling, Walnut Creek resident **Jack Broughton**, who faced several charges stemming from a fight outside the Studio Z nightclub during the Drag King contest in August 2002, pleaded guilty to all counts February 18. Victims **Yvette Balderas** and **Mariah Sparks** were assaulted during the melee, and Broughton uttered homophobic remarks. He was later sentenced to house arrest.

March

Numerous AIDS organizations learned that the federal government slashed more than \$4 million in funding to San Francisco. Immediate impact was felt as some organizations reduced client services.

Mayor **Gavin Newsom** named **Jim Illig**, a gay city resident, to the Health Commission. Illig is the director of government relations for Project Open Hand.

Lesbian **Mariline "Marni" Sacks** was killed the night of March 4 after her vehicle was broadsided by a man in a stolen Toyota who was trying to get away from police. Sacks, 43, worked as a housekeeper, nanny, and caregiver.

Hundreds of AIDS activists converged on the state Capitol March 8 to demand that Governor **Arnold Schwarzenegger** and lawmakers save the AIDS Drug Assistance Program.

Benefits for transgender city employees were expanded after the Board of Supervisors in late February removed the one-year wait period imposed in the original law.

Citing a lack of studies looking specifically at San Francisco's black gay men, community activists began meeting in March to make sure that research studies include black gays, and to create a health agenda for that community.

The AIDS Housing Alliance formed to assist people living with AIDS looking for permanent housing. Founder **Brian Basinger** said the goal of the group is to work with landlords who are interested in helping PWAs.

AIDS activist **David Pasquarelli** died of complications from cytomegalovirus infection March 8. He was 36.

April

The **Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence** celebrated its 25th anniversary with an annual Easter party in Dolores Park.

Six formerly homeless queer youth moved into the Perramont Hotel in the Castro as part of a new housing program spearheaded by Supervisor **Bevan Dufty** in collaboration with Larkin Street Youth Services and Dimensions health clinic.

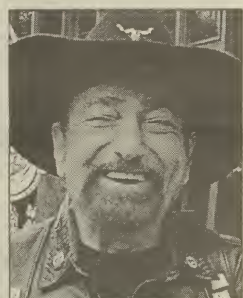
Vince Constabileo and his partner **Peter Howells**, broke ground on the new Three Dollar Bill Café

on the ground floor of the LGBT Community Center. The café opened in June and quickly became a popular hangout for community center visitors and others.

On April 2, what would have been his 70th birthday, the ashes of *Bay Area Reporter* publisher **Bob Ross** were scattered in San Francisco Bay, just past his beloved Golden Gate Bridge. Mr. Ross died December 10, 2003 of complications from diabetes.

The Board of Supervisors appointed **Theresa Sparks**, a former member of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission and a transgender activist, to the revamped Police Commission. B.A.R. political editor **Wayne Friday**, who had served on the old commission, stepped down April 28.

Governor **Arnold Schwarzenegger** blocked the parole of a gay prisoner, saying the man, **Kevin Leigh**, was a "danger to society." Leigh was convicted of second-degree murder for killing **Rick Diamond** in a drug dispute in 1985 in Southern California.



Daddy Alan Selby

May

Beloved leatherman **Daddy Alan Selby** died May 2 of complications related to emphysema. He was 75.

Gene "Bella" Boche, who was San Francisco Empress II, died unexpectedly April 29 in Palm Springs. He was 70.

Thomas E. Horn, who took over operations at the *Bay Area Reporter* following the death of founder **Bob Ross**, was officially named publisher May 14. Attorney **Paul Melbostad**, of the firm Goldstein Gellman Melbostad Gibson and Harris, was named legal counsel, succeeding Horn.

Sexy gay city resident **Rick Dinianian**, 55, was named *Playgirl* magazine's Mr. June.

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Mr. June Rick Dinianian

News in brief

compiled by Cynthia Laird

Reflection on AIDS epidemic

A community forum takes place Wednesday, January 5 revolving around lessons learned from the AIDS epidemic. Entitled "Surviving an Epidemic," the forum is being held in conjunction with "Rattlesnake in a Moving Car," an art exhibition currently at the San Francisco Public Library. Long-term survivors, friends, partners, caregivers, and others are welcome to attend; the event takes place from 6 to 7:45 p.m. in the Latino-Hispanic Room at the main library, 100 Larkin Street, at Grove. For more information, call Lanz Lowen at (510) 530-6875.

Forum on gay men and aging

The San Francisco Gay Men's Community Health Initiative will host a forum on gay men and aging Wednesday, January 5, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the LGBT Community Center, 1800 Market Street.

Entitled "From 20 to 80: Gay Men Growing Older," the forum will include a dialogue across the decades, according to organizers. Panelists include Empress XXV Marlena, owner of Marlena's bar; Ralph Hyman; psychotherapist and author Rik Isensee; John Land, director of New Leaf's Outreach to Elders program; and Tim Roseborough, a gay man in his 30s, and David Miller, a gay man in his 20s.

The discussion will touch on topics such as: how do gay men

feel about growing older, are older gay men really part of the 'gay family portrait,' how can the youth-obsessed gay men's culture move beyond the myths, and how gay men can begin to share and learn from those of different generations.

BLOW holiday party

BLOW - Beautiful Lips on Whistles - will host its "Hair of the Dogs" party Sunday, January 2 from 3 to 6 p.m. at the Eagle Tavern, 12th and Harrison streets, in San Francisco. The \$8 beer and beverage benefit will benefit BLOW and the Center for Sex and Culture.

This year's special guest will be Terrance Alan, who is being honored for his harm reduction work and his work on the San Francisco Entertainment Commission. Emcees for the afternoon include Sister Kitty Catalyst and Manley Lennox.

BLOW is a grassroots organization that was started five years ago to hold annual events to educate community members about hate crimes and using whistles as safety tools against such crimes.

The Center for Sex and Culture (www.centerforsexandculture.com) provides non-judgmental, sex-positive sexuality education and support through classes, workshops, social gatherings, and other events.

'Mama's' toy drive a success

Sandy "Mama" Reinhardt and Mark Paladini have announced that the third annual "Mama's Toy Drive" was quite a success this year. The drive, which starts in

July and continues through the Christmas season, collected over 3,800 toys and just more than \$4,000 in cash donations. Half of the gifts were donated to Project Sunburst and the Camp Sunburst program for children with HIV and their families, and the remainder went to the San Francisco Police Department's Operation Dream program. The cash went to Sunburst Projects to pay for scholarships to send kids to camp.

Reinhardt and Paladini expressed their appreciation to all those who have contributed. "It took a couple of years to get going," Paladini said in an e-mail, "but this year was a real hum-dinger!"

For information on Reinhardt's other activities in the San Francisco leather community, visit www.mamasfamily.org.

Fairy Butch's New Year's

Fairy Butch will present "In Bed with Fairy Butch" Friday, December 31 at the Swedish American Hall, 2174 Market Street, at Church. Doors open at 9 p.m., with early entry and hors d'oeuvres for advance registrants at 8. The show begins at 10.

Fairy Butch plans a festive event, complete with four theme rooms, party favors, beverages, and music. Singles and couples are welcome.

Admission is \$20-\$30 sliding scale, or \$15 for "truly broke students and the unemployed," according to an e-mail. For more information, call (415) FEZ-8000. For early entry registration, e-mail fb@fairybutch.com.



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OPEN FORUM

Marriage, round one

We expected that the antigay legal groups fighting the city over the state's marriage laws would resort to the lowest tactics by employing faulty arguments – like gay and lesbian couples make unfit parents – but we didn't expect Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer to give them a pass when they tried to paint us as suffering from "mental disorders." Yet, that is exactly what has happened in the latest developments after two days of hearings last week. The San Francisco City Attorney's office said Monday that Kramer will not allow city lawyers to submit opposing arguments to counter several declarations in the antigay groups' documents, like gays can be "cured" and other pseudo science that has long been debunked by mainstream researchers. While Kramer has said that he will decide the case based on legal arguments rather than factual disputes, his decision is a blow to the city's case because in future appellate court hearings some other judge might not be so enlightened.

In their documents, the Alliance Defense Fund and the Campaign for California Families submitted declarations from such "notable" experts as Exodus International, one of the ex-gay groups that claim homosexuals can be cured, and Princeton University researcher Jeffrey Satinover, who specializes in "reparative therapy" for gays. Satinover also believes the American Psychiatric Association was wrong when it removed homosexuality from its list of mental disorders in 1973. Other declarations suggest that children need a parent of each sex because of the inherent differences in men and women.

These specious arguments have all been heard before and fail to stand up to scrutiny; they play on stereotypes rather than sound science.

Lawyers representing the antigay groups resorted to name-calling and other childish moves last week, at one point calling the plaintiff couples "props" and arguing in court that marriage is for procreation, period. Obviously, using that logic, many heterosexual couples would not be allowed to get married.

We believe Judge Kramer was wrong not to accept the city's counterarguments concerning mental fitness of gays, and we worry that having such statements as part of the court record will come back to haunt us

down the road.

A look ahead

As 2004 comes to a close, we'd like to acknowledge a few straight politicians who are, in our opinion, the face of the future. Topping our list is Mayor Gavin Newsom. Newsom defied conventional wisdom and his own political party when he decided to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples in February. And the Democratic Party has not forgiven him yet, although it should. Newsom was shunted to the sidelines during the presidential election, at a time when straight-talking Democrats were harder and harder to find.

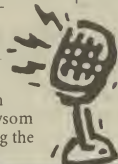
City Attorney Dennis Herrera is another rising politician who has stood his ground and kept the city attorney's office in the spotlight with its groundbreaking legal work. "Equal means equal," Herrera told us earlier this month, before the same-sex marriage cases were heard in court. We couldn't agree more. While the city faces a daunting task in winning this case, it is the leadership

of Herrera and his top staff members that has put the city firmly on record in support of equality. Few public officials would be willing to take such a risk, but Herrera is not one to duck from a challenge.

Local LGBT lawmakers Assemblyman Mark Leno and state Senator Carole Migden are also in the forefront as we enter 2005. Hearings will begin next year on Leno's new marriage bill, and he has tirelessly worked with Democratic lawmakers to win their support. This time around, he has the backing of Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez.

Migden, of course, brought home the money when she was in the Assembly; and while the state's fiscal picture is dramatically different as she begins her term, she will chair the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee. She, too, wants equality for LGBT residents and has built a formidable base of support over the years.

What these people have in common is their self-confidence – and the conviction to do what is right. So many times, politicians look at opinion polls to decide what course of action to follow. ▼



Editorial



Staying on top of sexual health

by Tom Kennedy

There's one reason why STDs are so common in our community that has nothing to do with sex – or how much sex we're having. It's our silence after finding out we have one that keeps them circulating all around town. This silence says a lot about our community, our times, and who we are as men.

Tough to admit, my own track record for following up with guys after discovering I had an STD hasn't been exactly stellar. And when I had more hang-ups about guys and sex, it didn't happen very often. I thought they'd find out eventually – just like I did – and that it wasn't anything to worry about.

I learned this "every man's responsible for himself" mindset during the worst of the AIDS epidemic. If I chose to take a risk, the consequences were mine to bear. If he took one, they were definitely his. My health. His health. It's a form of radical individualism and it's how a lot of us coped with, and survived, that horrible time.

Fortunately, times have changed. And so has our mindset about sex. Statistics show that we started having more sex and taking more sexual health risks not long after protease inhibitors were introduced in 1995. Rates of syphilis and rectal gonorrhea have increased significantly. So did our average number of sex partners. These days, sex is certainly more casual, more fun, and more plentiful.

Our mindset continues to change in other ways, too. We're learning we can get an STD check-up and don't have to confront issues of HIV at each and every visit if we don't want to. We're also re-learning the

importance of regular check-ups for the most common sexually transmitted diseases (because most STDs are so much easier to get than HIV, more frequent check-ups may be necessary). Happily, the word "testing" is no longer so strongly associated with matters of life and death.

The time has come to relax about telling our tricks and playmates that we have an STD and that they may, too. Now that testing triggers less fear, saying, "You might have been exposed" can follow suit as well. The reality is that most STDs aren't that big a deal, as long as you get them treated. Without treatment, they can lead to lots of nasty consequences.

So, why go back and tell him?

Because having an STD makes HIV transmission two to four times more likely. That's reason alone to spread the word. Here's another: What's come around is still going around. It could affect you again, one of your friends, or a friend's friend. In this small town, three degrees of sexual separation probably isn't an overstatement. There's a link between our own sexual health, his sexual health, and our community's sexual health.

Friends have told me that before HIV, there wasn't much shame in having an STD. It wasn't a big deal – no worries about how you got one or who gave you one. You just had one, treated it, and gave a heads-up to your circle of friends and playmates that the clap was making its rounds again. And then people filed into the clinics.

These days, that's not exactly the case. Few guys report getting calls or e-mails giv-

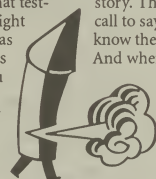
ing them a heads-up. Most guys remain silent about having one – which makes some sense given that sending post-hookup "thanks for having me over, I had a great time" e-mails aren't exactly in fashion. For a lot of guys, tricks get erased from memory almost as fast as their e-mails, addresses, or names do.

Fuck-buddies are usually a different story. They typically treat each other well, call to say thanks, see what's up, or to let us know they'll be out of commission for a bit. And when fuck-buddy relationships end, a bond of caring usually remains.

What if we started to treat more of our tricks like "ex-super-short-term-fuck-buddies?" Or let a slightly bigger bond of respect and recognition exist after playtime is over? If we did, the friendliness-quotient in the Castro would probably go through the roof. For starters, there would be a lot more saying "hi," "thanks again for that" and smiles of remembrance. And a lot fewer STDs floating around.

Next time you have one, consider breaking the habit of silence. Call him. E-mail him. Drop a note off at his place. Or, send him an e-card from InSPOT.org. Don't be silent – San Francisco's a small town, after all. ▼

Tom Kennedy is the program director for ISIS Inc., developers of InSPOT.org, where guys can send e-cards to let their playmates know they may have been exposed to an STD.



Guest Opinion

LETTERS

ENDA needs TG protection

I was disappointed and, frankly, distressed to read Mr. Carpenter's commentary suggesting that the Human Rights Campaign reverse its decision to support the inclusion of transgender protection in ENDA and other legislation ["Wither HRC?" *OutRight*, December 23]. He suggests that this HRC board decision will kill ENDA, although it seems hard to point to much success in the efforts to pass this legislation over the years it has been before the Congress as currently written. It appears that, in the name of political expediency, he is willing to leave a significant portion of our communities unprotected. Experience has shown us that once a piece of civil rights legislation is put in place it is exceedingly difficult to broaden its scope and coverage. If we do not include all of our communities under the protection of ENDA and other legislation, it is likely to take decades before the omission can be rectified.

I am proud that Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays Inc., has been a leader in the movement to include gender identity under legislative protection. PFLAG has supported transgender inclusion for many years. Our mission is to promote the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons, their families and friends. We envision a society that embraces everyone, including those of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

At the urging of our grassroots volunteer leadership, the PFLAG national board of directors has adopted a firm policy that we cannot support legislation that does not include protection for all those included in our vision and mission. We think it is high time that other GLBT advocacy and support organizations join us in insisting that all members of GLBT communities be granted full civil rights and legal protections. We enthusiastically applaud and support the decision of the national board of directors of the Human Rights Campaign to move toward including all members of our communities. No member of our diverse communities deserves to be left behind.

Samuel Thoron
National President, PFLAG
San Francisco

Stop attacking gay lefties

I'm probably not the only B.A.R. reader who is sick and tired of the way Dale Carpenter twists every opinion piece on any topic into disingenuous attacks on what he calls "gay leftists" (whoever they are), the Democratic party, any (non-Republican) leader or organization in the gay community, and anybody who isn't simultaneously ideologically pure, and willing to compromise on every LGBT issue. In column after column, Carpenter never fails to spew this kind double-standard nonsense demonstrating his credentials as a fulltime resident of the bizarre world known as "Andrew Sullivan Land." But there is an exception to this "Dale-rule." It does not apply to Republicans.

Take, for example, Carpenter's recent column about the Human Rights Campaign. After some gratuitous piling on Cheryl Jacques for being too recently out of the closet and having "irked" HRC's staff, it becomes clear that Carpenter's real problem with HRC is that its policies are not identical to those of the Log Cabin Republicans.

For instance, Carpenter is apoplectic that HRC decided to include transgender protections in ENDA, characterizing as "blatant" Jacques's recognition of the "T" part of the diverse LGBT community as deserving legal protection from discrimination. Carpenter claims the inclusion of transgenders will make it harder to pass ENDA, but his only evidence for this is that fewer senators have signed HRC's non-discrimination pledge now that it includes "gender identity." (By the way, one of these non-signers is Carpenter's friend Arlen Specter, but being a Republican, Carpenter exempts him from criticism for this.)

Next, Carpenter says HRC made a mistake in endorsing Kerry in the spring of 2004 and in this way lost "leverage." Give me a break. By the spring of 2004 Kerry had wrapped up the nomination, so what credible leverage, exactly, did HRC have? Threatening to endorse Bush if Kerry didn't use the word "gay" more during his campaign? Moreover, HRC was absolutely correct in rallying behind Kerry early in support of the overriding goal of anybody interested in gay rights: getting rid of Bush, because no version of ENDA, nor any other pro-gay legislation, has any chance of becoming law while Bush remains in office.

Finally, Carpenter describes as "wooden and silly" HRC's decision to endorse Arlen Specter's opponent (who unambiguously opposed the FMA) in the 2004 Pennsylvania U.S. Senate race. While it is true that Specter is more gay-friendly than most Republican senators, that isn't saying all that much, especially when you consider that Specter, in a crass political move, voted in favor of a cloture vote on the FMA, which Carpenter describes as merely "procedural." But of course Carpenter and Specter both know that the vote would be widely, and correctly, seen as an indication of the strength of Senate support for the FMA. Far from being "procedural," that vote was a di-

rect slap at the gay community, and Specter did it to court anti-gay voters in a tight re-election campaign.

Specter also bent over backwards to avoid speaking out on the FMA, and when he finally was forced to do so, he didn't actually oppose it, instead saying it was "premature." But he was quick to add that if the states didn't do enough to ban gay marriage themselves; he was "prepared to consider a constitutional amendment." Now come on, Dale, that's hardly what I would call courageous and stalwart support for the LGBT community. And what would Mr. Carpenter have to say if John Kerry had done the same?

Joe Whalen
San Francisco

UCSF's hypocrisy in action

Although the University of California, San Francisco cancer clinic allows tobacco smoking in front of its building at 1600 Divisadero, they chose to make an issue of my smoking half a medical marijuana cigarette in the same location before undergoing chemotherapy. They virtually encourage tobacco use, a known cause of lung and other cancers, while making an issue of a cancer patient using medical marijuana to relieve side effects of chemotherapy. Rather than cut someone a little slack, they chose to lead me to an examination room to be confronted by two uniformed officers. Two men were used to confront this 66-year-old crippled cancer patient. Fortunately, I had my health department-issued Medical Cannabis Voluntary ID patient card,

which put an end to the uncaring, cold-hearted interrogation that had begun. UCSF's behavior violated both the spirit of California's compassionate medical marijuana laws as well as any sense of institutional integrity.

John Cailleau
San Francisco

'Only in Ess Eff'

Thanks to John Karr and Mark Mardon for their articles on the Cockettes in the December 16 issue ["Let your freak flag fly," and "Pam's big tent."]. It's a slice of gay San Francisco history that should never be forgotten. Personally, I didn't much care for the Cockettes in 1970. I preferred the manly demeanor of the "real men" I found South of Market, who turned out to be no more or less "real" than Hibiscus. Just different. In retrospect, my Folsom leather fantasy world wasn't all that unusual and could be found in many cities across America.

But the Cockettes were truly unique, an "only in Ess Eff" phenomenon. Thanks to Karr and Mardon, I just read Pam Tent's *Midnight at the Palace*, a hilarious page-turner of a book, and felt I was right in the middle of those squirming, drugged out, nelly drag queens, living a high that can never be duplicated. (Will anyone write "Midnight at the Boot Camp"? I doubt it.) Many thanks to Sweet Pam for this rollicking account of a special era in San Francisco history, as well as to David Weissman and Bill Weber for their 2001 documentary *The Cockettes*. Together, the book and the film are a hoot. The Cockettes are as much a part of San Francisco gay history as Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, or Harvey Milk.

Bob Eakin
San Francisco

Rights must be claimed

Enough of the finger pointing. As a gay man I'm the one to blame for returning George W. Bush to the White House.

On February 13, I married another man.

Just like the more than 4,000 same-sex couples who were married at San Francisco City Hall, the supporters of family and friends, the other gay and lesbian couples who were married in Oregon, New York, and Massachusetts, I am guilty of bringing out all of those antigay voters across the country.

As the Republicans circle and swoop like vultures, cowardly Democrats are trying to hang Mayor Gavin Newsom out to dry because he has stood firm in his convictions to support gay marriage. Espousing their overly simplistic explanation for the results of this election, these whining and dishonest politicians turn away from the unpopular issues and once again retreat to their place of privileged refuge.

I hear them saying, "This is not the right time. You should wait. Look at what you did."

Wait for what? Wait for someone to hand my civil rights to me? Has any group ever been given their civil rights - their freedoms - because it was the right thing to do? Those rights must first be claimed.

Jon-Ivan Weaver
San Francisco

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Isn't it romantic?

by Paula Martinac

In a funny coincidence, a report that same-sex couples are already beginning to file for divorce in Massachusetts appeared at roughly the same time as the news that Ellen DeGeneres had split with her partner of four years, Alexandra Hedison (according to the gossip rags, to start a relationship with actress Portia de Rossi). Neither story is particularly shocking, but both remind us that lesbians and gay men are just as vulnerable to the addiction of romance as their straight counterparts are.

Do the words "divorce" and "romance" really belong in the same paragraph? Indeed, we can probably lay some of the blame for the high divorce rate in this country on the fact that our culture is swept away with romance — the head-over-heels early stage of a relationship when your loved one's every word is pure minted gold. (A therapist I once knew called it "the yummy period.") Many of us still believe that this time in a relationship is the very essence of love. In reality, the first few months — or, if you're lucky, years — of a relationship are a thrilling, lusty time that most couples can't sustain over the long term.

It's not surprising that so many people crave romance. After all, popular culture is rife with its imagery and plots. TV shows like *The Bachelor* play into the fantasy. But, tellingly, four out of five of the bachelor contestants have already dumped the women they picked to be their life mates.

And how many movies have you seen about long-term relationships, about sticking it out for better or worse? When a movie does depict a marriage of long standing, it's usually not the focus of the film; Mom and Dad, for example, might serve as a counterpoint to the "real" relationship, which belongs to the young people at the height of giddy romance. It's rare to see a film like *The Clearing*, a poignant thriller with a straight couple's longtime relationship at its heart; or *Normal*, in which a married couple of

25 years tough it out together through the husband's sex reassignment.

Taking it a step further, it's not a stretch to say that our consumer economy depends heavily on Americans wanting to meet, date, and marry their "soul mates." We start out placing personal ads and subscribing to dating services to help us find each other, then move into an elaborate culture of courting, complete with flowers, romantic dinners, and weekends away. Then there's the wedding itself — an event whose cost can easily run to five figures — which is routinely referred to as the "happiest day" of a couple's life. Women, in particular, have gotten the hard sell on romance, probably because statistics show that 90 percent of us in every generation from the mid-1800s to the present



Lesbian Notions

have married.

Given all this, it's understandable that many gay people aren't immune to the larger culture of romance. We, too, want the "happily ever after" fantasy, popularized in many of our own films and novels. And in the days before we could get domestic-partnered, civil-unioned, or married, our relationships sparked and then fizzled with little notice or legal ado.

But now that our relationships are in the news, so are our breakups. And guess what? Just like many straight people, we marry in a whirl of excitement, simply because we can, and some of us for the wrong reasons. And just like straight people, we may forsake our partners and spouses for our drug of choice — the excitement of a new romance. ("Life is full of surprises," DeGeneres told the *Advocate*, as explanation for her sudden break with Hedison.)

The question is, will straight people judge lesbians and gay men



Christine Smith

more harshly than they judge themselves, even though in matters of the heart, we show ourselves to be just as weak? After all, while we have Ellen, they have Britney.

Already, opponents of equal marriage rights have sniffed "I told you so" about the early same-sex divorces in Massachusetts, which, they say, prove we don't deserve the right to marry and are unsuited to the institution because of our alleged "promiscuity." (Actually, they only note gay men's "promiscuity"; lesbians tend to flummox right-wing data, so it's better to ignore us.)

It's encouraging, though, that on the gossip page of the *New York Post*, Ellen's break-up was included matter-of-factly with all the dish about straight celebrities. That may seem like a small thing, but it's one more way of showing that gay people are (surprise!) human, after all.

And maybe more important, the probate clerks in Massachusetts who handle divorces have made no big deal of the rather early exits some same-sex couples have taken from the bonds of matrimony. "A divorce is a divorce," said one. Gertrude Stein (who, by the way, was with Alice for almost 40 years) couldn't have stated it better. ▼

Paula Martinac is a Lambda Literary Award-winning author of eight books and editor in chief of *Q Syndicate*. She can be reached care of this publication or at LesbianNotions@qsyndicate.com.

AEF's Christmas Eve treat



Rock Garner

Danilo Fuentes gets a hug from Santa Claus at the AIDS Emergency Fund's 17th annual Christmas Eve dinner for people living with AIDS and their guests. AEF volunteers served 1,200 dinners during three sittings in the Green Room at the Veterans Memorial Building and all enjoyed the holiday spirit.

POLITICS

Friends: Gavin Newsom and Dennis Herrera

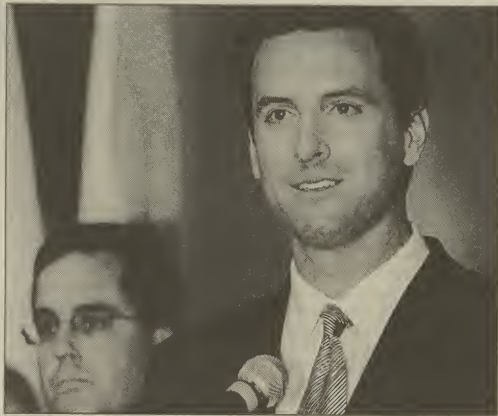
by Wayne Friday

When Mayor **Gavin Newsom**, barely settled into office, opened City Hall earlier this year to same-sex marriage, this writer knew San Francisco had elected the right candidate as its new mayor. Much praise should also go to another friend of ours, probably the second most powerful person in City Hall: City Attorney **Dennis Herrera**. A front-page profile on Herrera in the *San Francisco Chronicle* last week elicited a couple of interesting letters to that paper, both criticizing the *Chronicle* for its apparent prejudice in describing Herrera as an "unlikely leader" in the fight for marriage equality for gay and lesbian couples because he happens to be "a straight Catholic family man from Long Island." The letters described Herrera as a "principled politician dedicated to the public good," and an example of "upstanding religious people (who) defend civil rights valiantly."

To me, what makes this debate notable is that who else but Herrera could be the subject of a highly favorable newspaper profile where critical responses heap still more praise on the first-term city attorney? Last week's focus on Herrera came as oral arguments were heard in San Francisco Superior Court on the city's constitutional challenge to discriminatory state laws that restrict marriage rights to opposite-sex couples only, a case that has since been consolidated with subsequent challenges by gay and lesbian couples in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

And just in case anyone should doubt or overlook the importance of Herrera's leadership in the same-sex marriage battle, the *Chronicle* profile included a comment from attorney **Jim Lazarus**, the current recreation and parks commissioner who was the odds-on frontrunner in the 2001 city attorney's race. In that race, Herrera pulled off a stunning upset against Lazarus, with overwhelming support from the city's LGBT community—and, as it turns out, it's a good thing, he did. Indeed, Lazarus flatly told the *Chronicle* that if he had been elected city attorney, he wouldn't have sued the state as Herrera did, opting to try to "move the state from regulating marriage" to overseeing civil unions instead. Or as Lazarus said, "I would have approached it legislatively by changing state law to record civil unions." I should point out, of course, that city attorneys aren't legislators, so it's unlikely that a City Attorney Lazarus could have done little more than offer his encouragement, sincerely or otherwise, to Assemblyman **Mark Leno** (D-San Francisco).

So it may seem to some that "a straight Catholic family man from Long Island" would be an "unlikely leader" in the fight for marriage equality for gay and lesbian couples. But to those of us who have known Herrera all along, well, we wouldn't expect anything less from one of the LGBT community's most principled and courageous friends.



Mayor Gavin Newsom and City Attorney Dennis Herrera address reporters following the state Supreme Court decision invalidating the City Hall marriages.

Politics and people

Republicans in Washington state aren't ready to toss in the towel yet but after all the votes were finally counted (and recounted), Democratic Attorney General **Christine Gregoire** appears to be the final winner in the governor's race by a razor-thin 130-vote margin. Funny game, politics—when a preliminary count showed the GOP nominee winning by 42 votes, the state Republican Party was loudly calling for Gregoire's concession speech, but now that the final votes have been counted, and the Democratic nominee has a lead, the GOP says they're heading back to the courts for help.

And, yes, I do agree with California U.S. Senator **Dianne Feinstein** that it is time to abolish the Electoral College and choose the president by a national popular vote.

And from New York City comes word that the would-be homeland security secretary, **Bernie Kerik**, has now quietly left (booted?) former Mayor **Rudy Giuliani's** consulting firm. One can certainly understand the egg on **George W. Bush's** face ("Bernie is the man for this job"), however, it certainly wouldn't look well for Kerik, a man who reportedly was cheating on his wife with no less than two mistresses, to be joining a White House that got re-elected on a moral values platform, would it? Ha!

And more from the strange world of politics: *Time* magazine named Mayor Gavin Newsom as one of its "People Who Matter," saying the young San Francisco mayor was put on the list that includes such notables as **John Kerry**, **Ariel Sharon**, **Nancy Reagan**, and Afghan President **Hamid Karzai** because of his (Newsom's) decision to open City Hall to same-sex marriages earlier this year. The irony: *Time* assistant managing editor **Lisa Beyer** told CNN that the magazine had actually considered making Newsom its "Person of the Year," but that honor ended up going to President Bush, the man Newsom credits with escalating the antigay rhetoric that inspired his City Hall move.

Sacramento political insiders are saying that longtime Democ-

ratic Party consultant **Garry South** (he elected **Gray Davis** twice) can look elsewhere for work before the Democrats hire him again. South, proving that all political consultants are for sale, worked in the past election for JobsPAC, a group that endorsed only Republicans in the November election.

Arnold Schwarzenegger and **Maria Shriver** watchers should know that the guy and first lady actually spent Christmas in Maui, not Sun Valley, Idaho or Malibu as his people claimed.

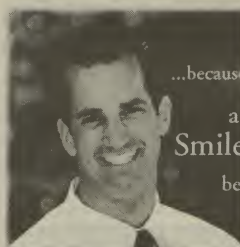
California isn't the only state with a sizable gay and lesbian caucus in its Legislature. Vermont will have four gay men in the state House and one in the state Senate after the first of the year.

Can anyone tell me what the hell bright guys like Secretary of State **Kevin Shelley** and state Senator **Don Perata** (D-Oakland), both with supposedly bright political futures, think about when they have a moment to think. I mean, talk about fools.

Democrats **Leland Yee**, **Mike Nevin**, and **Lou Papan** will apparently fight it out in the 2006 Democratic primary for the right to replace state Senator **Jackie Speier** (D-Hillsborough), and won't that one be fun (don't be surprised if **Milton Marks** jumps into that one as well).

And a report this week by the Center for Public Integrity, a non-partisan investigative organization, showed that advocacy groups supporting Democrat **John Kerry** outspent those backing President Bush by more than three to one during the final election cycle, proving for sure that dirty politics is alive and well in America if the money is well spent; the saturation of those deceitful Swift Boat Veterans for Truth ads suggesting that Kerry was somehow untruthful about events during his years of military service did the trick for the Bush-Cheney campaign and very likely had the biggest single impact on the election outcome.

As this year comes to a close, let me, on a personal note, wish a particularly great new year to **Matt Dorsey**; **Jim Hormel** and **Tim Wu**; **Audrey Moy**; **Robbie Robinson**, and **Jim Hammer**. To all my friends, readers, and those dear to them—a happy, healthy, prosperous 2005... and, thanks very much for everything. ▼



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What was the Council on Religion and the Homosexual?

by Liz Highleyman

January 1, 1965 (40 years ago this week): The Council on Religion and the Homosexual's New Year's ball is raided by San Francisco police.

The Stonewall riots in June 1969 are popularly regarded as the spark that set off the modern gay liberation movement. But an event four years earlier played a key role in the political empowerment of San Francisco's LGBT community.

The late 1950s and early 1960s were difficult years for the city's homosexuals. Following a 1961 "gayola" scandal in which police officers were indicted for extorting payoffs from gay bar owners, homosexual establishments were subject to an intensified wave of raids as police shut down venues that permitted same-sex touching or dancing—referred to in the law as "manifestation[s] of aberrant sexual urges or desires." But these same years also proved to be the genesis of gay political power.

During this period, homophile activists began forging links with liberal nongay individuals and groups. The Council on Religion and the Homosexual evolved out of a three-day retreat held in the spring of 1964 to discuss the relationship between churches and homosexuals. The idea was initiated by the Reverend Ted McIlvenna of Glide Memorial United Methodist Church, a social worker serving the teenage runaways and young hustlers who frequented the rundown Tenderloin neighborhood surrounding the church. Glide's progressive minister, the Reverend Cecil Williams, was a proponent of the era's liberation theology and a participant in the black civil rights movement.

Incorporated in December 1964, CORH included representatives from several other religious denominations (including the Episcopal and Lutheran churches, the Quakers, and the United Church of Christ), along with homophile leaders from the newly formed Tavern Guild (an association of gay bar owners) and Society for Individual Rights, as well as the older Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis. Under the influence of DOB co-founders Del

Martin and Phyllis Lyon, CORH addressed a range of issues including homelessness, employment discrimination, and the needs of transsexuals.

To raise money for the nascent coalition, CORH planned a New Year's Day costume ball, co-sponsored by six homophile organizations. Given the political and legal climate of the day, a well-publicized event attended by homosexuals was certain to pique police interest. After the police unsuccessfully pressured the proprietors of the ball's venue, California Hall, to cancel the benefit, CORH lawyers and ministers met with the police sex-crimes unit, and believed they had received assurances that police would not disrupt the dance.



Past Out

Despite their promises, the police came out in force on the night of the ball. An estimated 50 officers with motorcycles, squad cars, and patrol wagons blocked off an intersection and took up positions on Polk Street outside California Hall. The police trained floodlights on the hall's entrance, photographing each of the several hundred attendees (many in drag) as they entered or left. When they attempted to block police from entering the venue without a search warrant, volunteer ticket-taker Nancy May and three lawyers—including Herb Donaldson, who would later become California's first openly gay judge, and Mattachine attorney Evander Smith—were arrested.

The following day, seven CORH ministers held a press conference at Glide accusing the police of "intimidation, broken promises, and obvious hostility." In the eyes of the public, the clergy gave these complaints a legitimacy and credibility not often accorded homosexuals themselves. The *San Francisco Chronicle* ran an editorial condemning the raid, and Mayor John Shelley demanded a report from the chief of police. The American Civil Liberties Union represented the arrestees in court, but the judge instructed the jurors to return a not guilty verdict even before testimony was completed. The following June, CORH published a report, "A Brief of Injustices: An Indictment of Our Society in Its Treatment of the Homosexual," which decried the social, legal, and economic oppression of LGBT people. "The

law should be concerned with protection of youth and guarding the public against force or predatory conduct," the report stated. "Otherwise sex should be a personal liberty."

The police actions at the New Year's ball opened the eyes of heterosexuals to the extent of the persecution facing the city's LGBT population. "This is the type of police activity that homosexuals know well, but heretofore the police had never played their hand before Mr. Average Citizen," wrote Del Martin in the DOB newsletter, *The Ladder*.

In the aftermath of the CORH ball raid, homophile leaders pressured the police to appoint a community liaison and also formed Citizens Alert, a hotline providing assistance to victims of police abuse. The police department dramatically reduced its harassment of gay bars and arrests for cruising. Homophile organizations initiated annual candidate nights, where office-seekers courted the gay vote. "It really opened the door for a lot of things," homophile activist George Mendenhall later recalled. "It made people aware of the gay community, and it woke up a lot of people to accept us that hadn't accepted us before."

Though not as legendary as Stonewall, the 1965 raid gave San Francisco's gay men and lesbians one of their first tastes of victory, and set in motion a process that would culminate in the LGBT community becoming a major political force within the city. ▼

Liz Highleyman is a freelance writer and editor who has written widely on health, sexuality, and politics. She can be reached care of this publication or at PastOut@qsyndicate.com.

Suggested reading

Boyd, Nan Alamilla. 2003. *Wide Open Town: A History of Queer San Francisco to 1965* (University of California Press).
D'Emilio, John. 1983, 1998. *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* (University of Chicago Press).

DP law

◀ page 3

or the AIDS Drug Assistance Program. Although state law would usually require partners' incomes to be assessed jointly, Robert Miller, DHHS spokesman, told the *Bay Area Reporter*, that state programs that receive federal funding may be subject to federal law, which treats domestic partners as legal strangers. At press time, DHHS officials had not yet determined how domestic partners would be assessed for need-based programs.

"They're still working on it,"

said Miller earlier this week. "We are hoping for an answer by the end of the year."

For couples who are already registered but need some time to determine whether the added partnership responsibilities will be a hindrance, the NCLR and EQCA publication, *The New California Domestic Partnership Law: What it Means for You and Your Family* advised either dissolving a partnership before January 1 or creating an agreement to specify how assets should be counted.

"One possible solution is to terminate your domestic partnership with the state, take the time that you need to organize your

legal agreements, and then re-register as domestic partners with the state when you are ready," said the publication. "Remember, however, that if you terminate your partnership, you will not be protected by the rights provided to domestic partners until you re-register. Another alternative is to enter into a post-registration agreement."

Pre-nups

Pre-registration agreements—treated as pre-nuptials—must be entered into by June 30, 2005 for couples who register before January 1. Couples who register after January 1 must draw up those

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COMMUNITY NEWS

New TIC coalition, legislation emerges

by Zak Szymanski

At a recent public hearing for Supervisor Chris Daly's controversial condominium conversion legislation, representatives from tenant groups and the AIDS Housing Alliance said that the disproportionate number of tenancies-in-common in District 8 meant one thing: gay people and/or people with AIDS were facing the highest number of evictions in the city.

But for many gay residents of the district and the city, the fact that areas like the Castro and Noe Valley account for 34 percent of the TICs citywide is a hopeful sign that one day they can achieve their dream of home ownership.

"They are the most affordable option for owning a home in the city," said Michael Sullivan, chairman of Plan C, the nonpartisan quality of life advocacy group, who pointed out that unlike houses or condominiums, TICs — where a buyer owns a portion of a building and lives in one of its apartments — are sometimes available for below \$400,000.

Earlier this month, Plan C announced that it had joined forces with the newly formed San Francisco TIC Coalition. Both groups are led by openly gay men, and both are concentrating their efforts on increasing access to TIC ownership and improving condominium conversion rates for existing TICs.

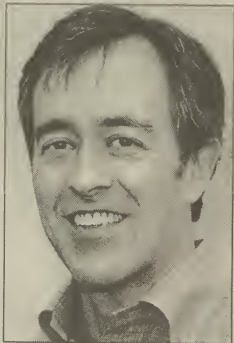
"We've been working together, and will organize around specific issues," said Sullivan. "We're allies, and we're fighting for a lot of the same things."

The controversy around TICs often revolves around evictions, and the ensuing legislation that has been aimed at reducing them.

When rental property is converted into buyers' property, it is inevitable that the lower income renters who cannot afford to buy their units must find another apartment. Because many of the units affected were previously rent controlled, tenant activists say that it is difficult for displaced tenants to find new homes that are also affordable.

To curb the impact to the stock of rental housing, San Francisco limits the amount of condominium conversions to 200 per year, administered through a lottery system. No lottery is needed to create most TICs, however, and typically, a rental building is vacated in order for it to be sold or delivered as a TIC.

The lottery exemption for TICs is described by tenant groups as a loophole for greedy landlords and speculators to evict lower income tenants, but TIC



Plan C's Mike Sullivan

proponents say it is the only option available for middle-class city dwellers to get their slice of the American dream.

"I would agree that most TICs are formed as a result of evictions," said Sullivan. "But the argument is usually framed as TICs removing rental housing from the market, and there's no way to get around the fact that they are also creating home ownership opportunities for those same people. The amount of renters is going down, too."

The TIC Coalition had its first meeting in September and presently has about 110 members according to board member Randy Brasche, who said his TIC building formed the group out of concern for legislation like Daly's, which was just passed by the Board of Supervisors and will add more competitors to the already-existing pool of those awaiting condominium conversions. The legislation brings previously exempt smaller, two-unit TICs into the condominium lottery if their owners or landlords have evicted disabled, elderly, or severely ill tenants. Brasche's building has been waiting several years for condominium status and as a result of Daly's legislation will probably face even more competition for one of the 200 coveted conversions each year.

The main reason some TICs are more affordable is that they aren't condominiums, and as such, are a riskier way to own property, explained Brasche. TIC owners do not own their individual units, but rather, a piece of an entire house. Banks are more reluctant to approve mortgages that list several people as debtors, and if one neighbor is unable to make payments, it becomes the responsibility of all the other residents to shell out the difference, or they lose their homes.

But the risk is precisely what makes it affordable, and a good trade-off for people like Brasche, who said that he does not oppose

the condominium conversion process for exactly this reason; having the risk is what allowed him "such a great opportunity" in the first place.

Still, said Brasche, after a number of years in existence as a TIC, a building should be able to convert to condominium status more easily, particularly if an already-existing TIC is not evicting tenants or removing rental stock from the market. That is why he said his group is pushing for the city to increase the number of allowable condominium conversions, or at least compromise when it comes to property that is already owner-occupied.

An immediate goal of both Plan C and the TIC Coalition is to support legislation by Supervisor Sean Elsbernd that intends to do just that. Elsbernd's office confirmed that the supervisor intends to introduce condominium conversion legislation early next year.

Such legislation is troubling for tenant activists, however, who point out that TICs are already the bulk of condominium conversions, in effect making TICs simply a stepping stone, or a way around the current law in order to get tenants out of a building.

"People buy into a TIC because they want to own a condo. Nobody really wants to own a TIC, because you're not really owning your unit. When you do a TIC you have to condo-convert, it's almost inevitable," said Tommi Avicoli Mecca of the Housing Rights Committee.

Another issue is whether TICs will even be thought of as "risky" — and therefore more affordable — if their chances of condo conversion are greater. As it stands, said Avicoli Mecca, TIC prices in District 8 already can top \$600,000, and he doubts that increasing the amount allowed for condo conversion will make them more reasonable.

"I'm not sure how the market would react to suddenly having more TICs out there, but every piece of data we have right now shows that 90 percent of San Francisco cannot afford TICs, so who are they going to market these to?" said Avicoli Mecca, who believes that more condominiums should be built, rather than created out of rental stock. "I think that a lot of TIC advocates are delusional in thinking we can TIC-to-condo our way into home ownership. If barely anybody can afford these, then they are going to wind up just sitting there, like live-work lofts and all those dot-com buildings." ▼

The next meeting of the TIC Coalition is January 31 at 7:30 p.m.; visit www.sfticcoalition.com for more information.

attorneys formed last summer to explore a legal ban of the "gay panic" and/or "trans panic" defense at trials. The Transgender Law Center and former San Francisco Assistant District Attorney Jim Hammer are two representatives of this effort, which seeks to address the problem in a way that does not prohibit a defendant from introducing a state of mind or motivation during a crime.

A "panic" defense is used precisely because it "plays into the fear and discomfort of jurors ... and it causes juries to sympathize

with the murderers instead of the victims," Hammer told the *Bay Area Reporter* last July. On the flipside, he said, if panic defenses were forbidden, "then we send a message to society that we don't care if the victims were transgender or gay, we're not going to treat the crime differently."

TIC's Chris Daly said that the coalition hopes to have broad legislation introduced within the next couple of years.

A retrial for Araujo's alleged murderers is scheduled to begin in May 2005. ▼

Gwen Araujo

◀ page 2

portunity to promote the transgender education fund set up in Araujo's memory; donations can be made at www.horizonsfoundation.org.

And the tactics also convinced family members and supporters that next time the case goes to trial, transgender education for the jury has to play a larger role.

Additionally, in response to the trial, a coalition of lawmakers and



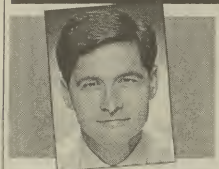
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Marriage rights become rites in 2004

by Bob Roehr

This was the year of marriage rights — again. And the subject is likely to cop top honors for several more years to come before the final chapter is written. But in some senses they may all seem a tad anticlimactic when compared with 2004.

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court had set the stage with the dramatic decision in November 2003 that "The Massachusetts Constitution affirms the dignity and equality of all individuals. It forbids the creation of second-class citizens ... the Commonwealth [of Massachusetts] has failed to identify any constitutionally adequate reason for denying civil marriage to same-sex couples."

However, the court gave the Legislature six months in which to take action before its order took effect. Legislators asked the court if they might create civil unions instead. Early in 2003, the court

said no; "Without the right to choose who to marry, same-sex couples are not only denied full protection of the laws, but are excluded from the full range of human experience."

Social conservatives preached gloom and doom, demanding that the legislators send a constitutional amendment to the people to let them decide the issue. The politicians obliged, setting a date for a constitutional session. Pro-gay forces mustered their own social and political capital for the fight.

The first session deadlocked over competing versions of an amendment and adjourned after three days of debate in early February.

That drama was upstaged on February 12 with the peal of wedding bells from San Francisco. Shortly before noon, lesbian icons Del Martin, 83, and Phyllis Lyon, 79, became the first same-sex couple granted a marriage license in City Hall. Their celebratory photo was splashed across the front page of the *San Francisco Chronicle* and

papers in many other cities.

Newly elected mayor Gavin Newsom, movie-star handsome and heterosexual, ordered the county clerk to issue licenses to same-sex couples, arguing that not doing so was unconstitutional.

And the floodgates opened. Gay and lesbian couples, many with kids in tow, rushed to City Hall to get married. Hundreds stood in line in the rain over the President's Day weekend to get their licenses. Many of them had been together for decades.

Other local officials in various corners of the country dared to join the fray for marriage equality: Sandoval County, New Mexico; New Paltz, New York; and Portland, Oregon were among the most prominent.

"Something is happening out there. Instead of begging for the basic right to marry, gay couples are now demanding it," wrote gay conservative Andrew Sullivan on his blog. "This will alter the debate ... and when the religious right try to strip us of those marriages, and force us back into second-class status, then we will see something else: resistance."

The country was shocked. And then, as the joyous scenes were replayed again and again in the media, the shock abated and many Americans began to understand that gay and lesbian couples really weren't all that different. All they wanted was the same thing as everyone else, to marry their partner and take on the full load of benefits and responsibilities that marriage entails.

The flurry of marriages didn't last long, however. Political pressure and lawsuits filed by social conservatives brought injunctions from the courts against further marriages in one jurisdiction and then another. And the door to marriage slammed shut. The tedious legal wrangling continues to play out in a handful of states and will continue to do so for a year or more. Many of the same-sex marriages performed during that brief period remain in legal limbo.

The California Supreme Court



Rick Germainer

Frank King Perez and Andrew Slakey were among the hundreds of gay and lesbian couples who married in San Francisco City Hall over the President's Day weekend.

invalidated the more than 4,000 same-sex marriages in August. The city and several gay and lesbian couples are now in court.

The Massachusetts Legislature met again as a constitutional convention at the end of March. It wasted little time in adopting a compromise amendment that would define marriage as only between a man and a woman. The amendment also would create civil unions for same-sex couples, turning back attempts by conservatives to divide the two issues on the ballot.

Civil unions, a notion that only a few years earlier had seemed so radical when first proposed in Vermont, had now become the compromise position in the battle for gay equality.

The final vote on the Massachusetts amendment was 105-92, barely more than the 101 votes needed for passage. The amendment requires a second vote of the Legislature meeting as a convention before it can be sent to the voters in November 2006 for their say.

But that did not stop the original order of the court from going into effect; on May 17 hundreds of gay and lesbian couples began to march down the aisles to pledge their troth each to the other. Out of state couples, however, were not permitted to marry in the Bay

State, thanks to an arcane 1913 law that Republican Governor Mitt Romney enforced.

National marriage politics

The Federal Marriage Amendment, to prohibit gays from marrying, had languished in Congress. It got a huge boost when President Bush held a February 24 White House press briefing to endorse the concept of the FMA without committing himself to the language of a specific amendment.

He blamed "activist judges and local officials [who] have made an aggressive attempt to redefine marriage," citing recent developments in Massachusetts and San Francisco. "Decisive and democratic action is needed because attempts to redefine marriage in a single state or city could have serious consequences throughout the country."

"Marriage cannot be severed from its cultural, religious and natural roots without weakening the good influence of society," Bush asserted. "The voice of the people must be heard."

"Log Cabin considers support for this amendment a declaration of war on gay and lesbian families and an attack on our sacred Constitution," said Patrick Guerriero, executive director of Log Cabin

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People in the news in 2004

by Bob Roehr

Who was Jim McGreevey? is likely to be a trivia question some years down the road. But for several weeks at the end of the summer, the nation was stunned and titillated by stories of the then-governor of New Jersey.

The tale began with a hastily called televised news conference on August 12 where McGreevey announced, "I am a gay American." The twice married, father of two was surrounded by his family.

The shocker was meant to draw attention away from another part of his statement, "circumstances surrounding the affair and its likely impact upon my family and my ability to govern," which would cause him to resign as governor.

First in dribs, then torrents, the soap opera-ish details of an alleged adulterous affair with Golan Cipel spewed forth. The governor had met Cipel on a trade mission to Israel and soon had him back in the states, getting him big bucks for little work, at least on the clock.

The prime line on Cipel's resume became that of New Jersey's homeland security czar, at the fifth highest salary in state government. It was a position for which he was wildly unqualified. But the spotlight wasn't good for the relationship, the pair appear to have squabbled, and Cipel was slid into a job in the private sector.

McGreevey claimed that he was being blackmailed. Cipel

claimed that he was heterosexual, and also, that he was offended by and resisted the governor's sexual advances — despite reports of his decidedly disheveled and casual look at an early morning breakfast at the governor's mansion. For a while, he threatened to sue for sexual harassment.

Then they both learned that neither side wins in a mud-throwing contest. McGreevey, a Democrat, stepped down as promised on

November 15.

Elizabeth Birch, former executive director of the Human Rights Campaign, joined Howard Dean's presidential campaign in January. It turned out not to be a long-term career move.

Cheryl Jacques succeeded Birch at HRC, a move that proved to be an only moderately longer term. Philosophical differences led to she and HRC parting ways by the end of the year.

Dave Noble waited until after the elections to step down as executive director of National Stonewall Democrats, where he had served for two years.

David Catania left the Republican Party earlier, in September. The D.C. City Council member and one of the most prominent openly gay Republicans could take no more of the party's gay bashing and anti-urban agenda. He became an independent. ▼



Former Governor Jim McGreevey

Marriage rights

◀ previous page

Republicans. It would be an important factor later that year in that group's decision not to endorse Bush's re-election.

The House and the Senate each held numerous hearings on issues surrounding gay marriage. Republican control of the process gave members of the religious right ample opportunity to voice their antigay rhetoric. The initial hearings brought much press coverage but by the end, few people seemed to care.

The Senate took up the FMA in July. Conservative supporters acknowledged that they did not have the two-thirds majority required to pass a constitutional amendment but they hoped to get a solid majority to build on.

They failed miserably. Not only could they not muster the 60 votes necessary on a procedural measure to close off debate, they could not get a simple majority. On July 14, the measure failed 48 to 50.



Same-sex couples and allies took to the streets in San Francisco on August 12 after the California Supreme Court invalidated the gay marriages.

Several senators who voted yes on procedural vote indicated that they would have voted against the substance of amendment.

Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry and running mate John Edwards were the only two senators who did not vote on the

amendment. Kerry continued to waffle on the issue throughout the campaign, affirming his support of traditional marriage as between a man and a woman; opposing the FMA as unnecessary; and supporting the antigay amendment to the Massachusetts Constitution.

The House went through the motions on a marriage measure on September 30. And while a majority voted for it, the 227 to 186 vote was well short of the required two-thirds margin for constitutional amendments.

Antigay marriage amendments to state constitutions were on the ballot in 13 states beginning in the summer and continuing into November. LGBT leaders had hoped to create a psychological and political firewall by stopping at least one of them. They pinned most of their hopes on Oregon. But they failed each and every time.

The silver lining was again in Massachusetts. A combination of no electoral backlash for their allies, key political retirements, and a few upset victories left state leaders optimistic that they would be able to defeat the antigay marriage amendment when it comes up for a second reading at a constitutional convention in 2005.

The beachhead of marriage equality would be protected while the legal struggle continues in the courts in a handful of states. ▼

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2004 LGBT news

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Poet **Thom Gunn** died in his sleep April 25 of an apparent heart attack. He was 74.

Buddhist AIDS Project co-founder **Steven Peskind** died May 6 of non-smoker's lung cancer. He was 46.

Longtime San Francisco AIDS Foundation Executive Director **Pat Christen** announced in May that she was leaving the organization. Openly gay **Lance Henderson**, SFAF's development director, was named acting executive director.

July

City health officials reported that a 47-year-old HIV-positive man died in September 2003 of complications of syphilis in his heart and brain, marking the first such documented case of neurosyphilis.

National grocer Trader Joe's announced it was eyeing a Castro locale to build the 200-store chain's flagship outlet. The move was met with mixed reactions from area residents, who worried about parking issues.

The San Francisco Human Rights Commission held the first public hearing ever on intersex issues.

Longtime AIDS advocate **Jeff Sheehy** on June 11 was named Mayor Gavin Newsom's unpaid AIDS policy adviser.

A multi-ethnic group of gay men on June 14 charged Castro bar owner **Les Natali** of racial discrimination at his Badlands and Detour bars. Natali denied the accusations and the matter went to the city's Human Rights Commission for an investigation.

July

Researchers revealed in the July 3 issue of the *Lancet* that the Explore study, the largest study of its kind involving gay men, failed to show that intensive counseling with HIV testing could stop the spread of the virus.

Magnet, the gay men's health center in the Castro, marked its one-year anniversary in early July. Executive Director **Steve Gibson** said the center surpassed expectations, with more than 3,000 men seeking services during its first year of operations.

Jordan Lee, the founder of the G40+ Club (now called the San Francisco Prime Timers), died June 20 after collapsing at the corner of Market and Noe streets. He was 78.

Brian Misque, 25, was convicted in Contra Costa County Superior Court of killing 22-year-old **Rogelio DeChavez**, whom he met on the Internet. The prosecution argued that Misque killed DeChavez after the pair had sex because he was conflicted about his own homosexual urges. In late September, Misque was sentenced to 16 years in prison.

Rick Thomas, a founder of the Castro Street Fair, died July 6 of pneumonia. He was 55.

Disabled activist and poet **Chris Hewitt** died July 13 of complications from pneumonia. He was 58.

August

Darlene Weide stepped down as executive director of the Stop



A multi-ethnic group of gay men protest Badlands owner Les Natali.

AIDS Project.

Kevin Burns was tapped as the interim executive director at Shanti after the previous director, **Hywel Sims**, resigned after 18 months on the job due to personal reasons.

Transgender city resident **Toni "Delicious" Green**, 45, was found murdered at the Franciscan Motel on Third Street on August 13. Her family and friends held a memorial August 22.

Longtime transgender activist **Cecilia Chung** was appointed by Mayor Gavin Newsom to serve on the San Francisco Human Rights Commission.

Lee "Lee-Ona" Thibodeaux, the longtime owner of Mr. Lee-Ona's cocktail lounge on Turk Street, died August 19. He was 68.

September

Gay Latino city resident **Jose Cisneros** was appointed as San Francisco treasurer September 8 by Mayor Gavin Newsom. Cisneros replaced **Susan Leal**, who took over at the Public Utilities Commission in May.

Pat Montclair, one of San Francisco premier *Empresses* and a nationally known female impersonator, died August 31 after a long illness. He was 63.

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed his first gay rights bill September 13. The law requires insurance companies to extend their policies to registered domestic partners in the same way they cover spouses.

Longtime medical marijuana advocate **Mary Gennoy** died September 5 of complications following throat surgery. She was 53.

City resident **Jay Michael Carbone**, 52, died at a local hospital after getting into an altercation with a man at the Pendulum bar in the Castro. **Joel Dickinson**, 49, was arrested and pleaded not guilty to a charge of involuntary manslaughter. Police said that Dickinson allegedly got into a fight with Carbone because he was sunbathing nude in the bar's patio.

Gay sheriff's deputy **Jon Gray**, 42,



Sheriff's deputy Jon Gray

accused the San Francisco Fire Department of weeding out gay applicants in its testing procedure and filed a \$500,000 claim against the city alleging he was denied a firefighter position based on his sexual orientation, gender, age, and disability.

October

Two decades after then-San Francisco Health Director Dr. **Mervyn Silverman** ordered the city's gay bathhouses closed to help stop the spread of AIDS, the decision is still being debated by health officials, gay activists, and political leaders.

A protest against racism in the Castro on October 1 drew 200 people.

Under One Roof, the Castro store that sells merchandise to benefit numerous HIV/AIDS organizations, reached total sales of \$10 million since its inception 14 years ago.

Steve Fogle, 42, the executive director of the Russian River Chamber of Commerce, was found dead of an apparent suicide October 7. His death came after law enforcement officials launched an investigation into the chamber over alleged embezzlement.

The Golden Gate Business Association, San Francisco's LGBT chamber of commerce, celebrated its 30th anniversary.

Willie Walker, a founding member of the San Francisco GLBT Historical Society, died September 29 following a long struggle with cancer and hepatitis C. He was 55.

B.J. Stiles was named interim executive director of the Stop AIDS Project.

November

Most of the LGBT community was stunned as President **George W. Bush** beat Democratic presidential candidate **John Kerry** in the November 2 election. What was to have been a celebratory party in the Castro turned somber as the Republicans solidified their grip on Congress and won four more years in the White House.

Gay San Francisco Supervisor **Tom Ammiano** easily won re-election in District 9. Meanwhile in District 5, **Robert Haaland** failed in his bid to become the first transgender supervisor elected to office. In Berkeley, **Darryl Moore**, an openly gay African American man, won a seat on the City Council. **Heather Hiles** lost her bid to remain on the San Francisco school board, while gay incumbent **Mark Sanchez** was re-elected.

Out lesbian **Carole Migden** easily won the 3rd District state Senate seat. Her win increased the Capitol's LGBT Legislative Caucus to six members (San Francisco Assemblyman **Mark Leno**, Santa

next page ▶

COMMUNITY NEWS

ACT UP/NY oral history project under way

by Dennis Conkin

Two longtime members of ACT UP/New York gave a presentation about the ACT UP Oral History Project at the main branch of the San Francisco Public Library on Thursday, December 16.

Author, playwright, and Lesbian Avenger co-founder Sarah Schulman and acclaimed activist and filmmaker Jim Hubbard, spoke of the importance of the project, which is sponsored by the Lesbian and Gay Experimental Film Foundation and received a major grant of \$300,000 from the Ford Foundation along with other financial support.

"That grant helped us to get state of the art equipment," Schulman said.

The project is ongoing, and there are currently 54 completed filmed interviews with AIDS activists that document the history

of ACT UP/New York from the initial organizing meetings through a controversial split in the group over its direction and emphasis and whether lesbian and gay and social activist issues were peripheral to specific AIDS issues such as access to treatments.

Hubbard said the interviews are "extremely diverse and extensive" and cover the views and motivations of a group of people who are "exceptionally talented, creative, and intelligent" and who are responsible for an era of major social change.

The purpose of the project is to present "comprehensive, complex, human, collective and individual pictures of people who have made up ACT UP/New York," according to the project's Web site.

"These men and women of all races and classes have transformed entrenched cultural ideas about homosexuality, sexuality, illness, health care, civil rights, art, media, and the rights of patients," the Web site stated.

"They changed the world and saved enormous numbers," Schul-



ACT UP/New York veterans Jim Hubbard, right, and Sarah Schulman talk about their oral history project.

man told the *Bay Area Reporter*. "That makes them heroes."

She encouraged other existing ACT UP chapters to conduct their own oral histories.

In one example of the importance – and the often unrecog-

nized and unheralded work of activists – Schulman points to one early member of the New York group, a heterosexual woman, who was responsible for major changes in insurance underwriting policies related to AIDS sim-

ply because she cared enough to use her expertise in the field to contact insurers and advocate for institutional as well as consumer-specific change.

"That was not happening anywhere else," Hubbard said. "It would have been lost."

There are 94 tapes in the collection, and only 54 have been edited, according to Schulman and Hubbard. Interviews range in length from 90 minutes to four and a half hours. Transcripts are available free in PDF format from the group's Web site as are some streaming video clips of the interviews. Unedited tapes of the interviews can be viewed at the San Francisco Library's James C. Hormel Gay and Lesbian Center.

The oral history project is seeking funds to complete the editing and processing of the remaining videos in the collection.

"Fifty-thousand dollars would go a long way," Schulman said.

For more information, to make a contribution, or to view interviews, visit the project online at www.actuporalhistory.org. ▼

2004 LGBT news

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Cruz Assemblyman **John Laird**, and Southern California members Assemblywoman **Jackie Goldberg** and state Senators **Christine Kehoe** and **Sheila Kuehl**).

Agencies providing services to gay men battling crystal methamphetamine addiction got additional funds enabling them to reduce wait times for clients.

Community members were angered with Castro Theatre owner **Ted Nasser** fired longtime programmer **Anita Monga**. Nasser said he would still show gay-themed and classic films at the movie palace but some movie buffs still expressed concerns.

Tenderloin Tessie's, a volunteer organization that has been feeding those in need on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter, marked its 30th anniversary.

December

Openhouse's LGBT senior housing project was the subject of a zoning battle after some staff at the redevelopment agency recommended that one of the parcels under consideration be set aside for affordable family housing, not senior housing.

Leroy Aarons, a former *Oakland Tribune* executive editor who founded the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association, died November 28 after a 10-month battle with cancer. He was 70.

HIV prevention advocate **Ronnie Anthony "Chata" Ashley** died November 27 of AIDS complications. He was 45.

Community reaction was mixed at a December 11 forum on merging the GLBT Historical Society with the Harvey Milk Branch of the public library.

Former Ambassador **James C. Hormel** was named to the Commonwealth Club's board of directors.

Magazine designer **F. Darrin Perry** died unexpectedly November 25. He was 39.

Famed San Francisco DJ **Michael Garrett** died in his sleep December 10. He was 52. ▼

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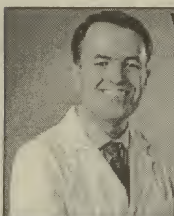
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New STD e-card site draws heavy traffic

by Kevin Davis

Figures released from a new Internet STD prevention site point to the need for public health advocates to develop and communicate effective prevention strategies now that such easy hookup sites have surpassed brick and mortar adult establishments as the venues where STDs are most reportedly transmitted.

In October, InSpot, the Internet Notifications Service for Partners or Tricks, was launched by Internet Sexuality Information Services Inc., in collaboration with the San Francisco Department of Public Health. The Internet site allows men to send e-cards to sexual partners alerting them that they may have been exposed to a sexually transmitted disease. Earlier this month, InSpot released data for the first several weeks of the service. The figures show that 5,312 people have sent 9,000 e-cards since the launch. Currently, the site, www.inspot.org, receives about 750 visitors per day, according to Executive Director Deb Levine. Syphilis and gonorrhea are the two most frequently named STDs in the e-cards.

The six venues most listed by the city's men who tested positive for syphilis and used the InSpot site were Manhunt.net: 72 men; Gay.com: 50; Craigslist.org: 48; Steamworks: 41; Badlands: 30; and Blowjobdies: 21.

More "environmental structural interventions" to encourage safer sex behavior and increase awareness are necessary, said Dr. Jeffrey Klausner, director of the STD Prevention and Control Services at the health department whose "Q and A with Dr. K" has a banner ad on several hookup sites. The prominence of safe sex links, whether located on the home page

or several page clicks into the site, is an issue that has long concerned Klausner.

"There could be public service ads on the way to the chat room," Klausner said. "Types of ads when members sign up to the chat room, or interactively, when you post a profile, one of the profile elements could include information about recent syphilis tests," he suggested. "A lot of this could be done."

The cruising site Manhunt.net was singled out by the National Coalition of STD Directors along with St. James Infirmary's Sexcity.com as sites that have been proactive in their actions around what Stephan Adelson, deputy general manager of Online Buddies Inc., Manhunt's owner, calls "member health."

Adelson successfully solicited and made presentations to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, public health departments in 17 states, and 48 community-based organizations, to provide information, anonymous STD partner notification, banner ads, and other ways to interact with Manhunt.

"The health departments didn't have policies in place. That's what got me on the talking circuit, trying to get them in the site."

"With our popularity we think it's extremely important. We're the number one site that has worked with various departments of public health to stem the tide of STDs," said Adelson. "Part of being the most popular, all the numbers go up."

He calls STD prevention an "important conversation for all gay men."

Logging onto the Web site, the patron first views assorted safe sex and health care banner ads. Manhunt.com also recently added HIV status as a profile multiple-choice question of "positive, negative, ask

me, or don't know." The site also does not allow men to mention party and play, although members can say, "I don't do PNP." It actively encourages clients to get tested for STDs.

The health agencies' biggest concerns, Adelson said, were that government computers had no access to adult sites.

Levine added that professional boundaries around graphic images and firewalls blocking explicit homepages limit participation of some health agencies.

"It's our philosophy because we're not health experts, we're Web site developers," Adelson said. "We've developed a community but we don't have a way to provide all the answers to our members."

"I want people to know how groundbreaking we are."

Gay.com

On Gay.com, media company PlaneOut Inc.'s flagship site, health information is just one of the services among news, gossip, and entertainment it offers its 3.3 million members. But some health officials have been concerned the site doesn't do more when it comes to STD prevention.

"Gay.com has not been very proactive," said Klausner.

Levine disagreed. She called Gay.com's responsiveness to its members "holistic," and said the big difference is its business model. Manhunt relies on memberships and receives no commercial ad banners, while Gay.com, aside from its premium features, has no membership cost.

"People all over want free ads from Gay.com," Levine said. "They have to decide what percentage to devote to public service. They give nonprofits a significantly discounted rate."

"We believe that the best way to convert our large base of free

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Tenderloin

◀ page 1

not upset its contract was put out to bid, but that the city changed the service model to be funded.

"We are not objecting that the contract went out to bid but we are concerned in the change of program model and change in oversight of the contract from DPH to DHS," she said. "It is not TARC versus Hospitality House. It is about preserving a peer-based self-help model to serve people who don't or can't access traditional services and who have successfully engaged with this model."

In September TARC was chosen through a competitive bidding process as the organization to receive the DHS funds necessary to provide the Tenderloin drop-in center homeless services.

"TARC entered into this process in good faith and presented an outstanding proposal. We feel that we were selected because TARC is in the position to offer many enhanced benefits in combination with our current array of homeless services, at no additional cost to the city," said Brown.

Officials at Hospitality House contend the program is first and foremost a mental health program and fear that aspect will be lost under new language in the contract. The agency's program

opened 17 years ago and is run on a peer-based model, where former clients help new people coming in the door.

"It is a mental health program first and foremost. The whole idea this is purely a homeless program and that we should treat it as all of our other homeless programs concerned us," said Jenks. "We are moving away from a peer-based model to where the people who work in the program aren't people who have gone through the same things as the people coming into the door are going through."

Jenks said Daly's legislation was meant to address that change in focus and was not meant to steal away funds from one agency to another.

"Regardless of what DHS is doing there should be a supplemental to have a peer-based self-help model in the Tenderloin to serve the purpose we serve. But that does not necessarily mean that would be Hospitality House," she said. "We really respect the work that TARC does, we are both part of this community and serving this community. The last thing Hospitality House wants is for it to be a struggle between two organizations pitted against each other."

Daly did not respond to a request for comment. Supervisor Tom Ammann, who voted for Daly's proposal, said that the vote should not be viewed as "an either

or" decision.

"The supplemental proposed by Daly is to keep Hospitality House going just till the middle of next year. Both programs are terrific but do qualitatively different functions," he said. "One of the mistakes is that Hospitality House is looked on as a homeless program but it's not. It's a community center."

Ammann said he hopes the board can find a solution that works for both agencies.

"I am hoping we can sort it all out," he said.

At this point Jenks said it is not certain which agency will receive funding. Daly's proposal includes funding for Hospitality House only through the end of the fiscal year. The city would put out a revised contract for bid once again and then select an agency to run the program.

The board is set for a final vote on the matter at its meeting January 4. However, the mayor could veto it and the board lacks enough votes to override a veto. Four supervisors, including Bevan Dufty, oppose the measure.

"I know the mayor feels very strongly that these funds should go to the contractor that won the bidding process," said Dufty. "I am not critical of Hospitality House; I just think you want an open competitive process. I don't understand how you ignore that." ▼

OBITUARIES

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Antoine "Tony" Levesque



Levesque, Antoine "Tony", of Provincetown, passed away on December 10, 2004. Tony grew up in Salem, Massachusetts and lived in the South End of Boston before relocating to San Francisco in 1998. He returned East in May, 2003, making his home in Provincetown.

During his years in San Francisco, Tony worked as a volunteer with Project Inform and on staff and as a volunteer

with Jewish Vocational Services. Tony is survived by many friends on both coasts and by his sister, niece and nephew. Tony will be remembered as a dedicated friend, who was always true to his word and to himself.

A memorial service was held Saturday, December 18 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Boston. Friends in San Francisco are coordinating a memorial service on January 8, 2005 at 1 p.m. at the AIDS Memorial Grove in Golden Gate Park, where Tony's name will be inscribed in the "Circle of Friends." Donations may be made to the AIDS Support Group of Cape Cod (800-905-1170) or to the Tony Levesque Inscription Fund @ AIDS Memorial Grove (888 294-7683).

Defrocked minister to challenge decision

by Jason Victor Serinus

Two days before a PBS documentary on the trials facing her Philadelphia neighborhood congregation was set to air nationwide, lesbian Methodist minister Beth Stroud announced Monday, December 27 her decision to appeal a Pennsylvania church court's ruling that defrocked her. Stroud, who first announced her relationship with her partner Chris Paige to the congregants of First United Methodist Church of Germantown in April 2003, was barred from the ministry for violating the United Methodist Church's law against "self-avowed practicing homosexuals" serving as clergy.

Since the court's decision on December 2, Stroud has served as a lay minister in the Philadelphia neighborhood church.

Although Stroud, Paige and her supportive, liberal congregation spent over a year readying for the trial, Stroud acknowledged that she had no idea how exhausting the ordeal would prove. Basically a private person, she was un-



Defrocked minister Beth Stroud

prepared to discover herself constantly in the spotlight.

In reaching her decision to appeal, Stroud said that a key factor was a statement shared with her

privately after the church trial by Bishop Joseph Yeakel, the presiding judge at the trial. Yeakel told Stroud "the day will come when the church apologizes for this decision."

Stroud will appeal two major aspects of the court's ruling. The first is that Yeakel specifically excluded people from the jury pool who, for matters of conscience, felt they couldn't abide by provisions in the Methodist Rules of Discipline that bar lesbians and gay men from serving as ordained clergy.

The second is that she contends she has not violated the greater Constitution of the United Methodist Church.

"I believe that the provisions of the Discipline that were cited in the charge are superceded by others that say that the Methodist Church abhors discrimination of all kinds and calls upon us to be inclusive of all peoples," Stroud explained in a post-decision telephone interview Monday. "Our discipline says that gay and lesbian people are people of sacred worth in the eyes of God."

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Gay couples

◀ page 1

now. In the past in the state of California I couldn't go into his hospital room. I think it's a new day and I thank God."

Other couples said they joined the cases in order to protect not only their own children but also gay and lesbian kids who deserve equal rights under the law.

"It's about being able to protect ourselves and each other and protect our families. I want that young gay or lesbian teenager who falls in love to have this option," said Pali Cooper, who has been with her partner, Jeanne Rizzo, 16 years and helped raise Rizzo's son. The couple were one of the first to be turned away by the city clerk after the Supreme Court ordered San Francisco officials to stop handing out marriage licenses on March 11.

"We were turned down in City Hall but this is not about us. It's a bigger issue," said Cooper. "If we don't stick up for ourselves, who will?"

"This is about standing up with dignity for who we are, a loving family," added Rizzo. "This is a very proud moment."

As a mother, Rizzo said the hardest part of being party to the proceedings is hearing the conservative groups question her ability to raise a child because she is a lesbian and argue that since marriage is meant for procreation

only a man and a woman deserve the right to marry.

"It is not going to be easy to hear it," she said. "Lancy and Cristy are raising a kid together; you can feel their pain. It is really hard to stand here and listen to it."

Rizzo was referring to Lancy Woo and Cristy Chung, a lesbian couple raising a six-year-old daughter, Olivia. The women were visibly upset by comments made by lawyers for the antigay groups during a press conference during the court's lunch break Wednesday.

More than 'props'

At first refusing to speak to the news media with the couples arrayed behind him, Benjamin Bull, a lawyer with the Alliance Defense Fund complained "this is a prop."

Attorney Gloria Allred, who is representing Tyler and Perry, fired back "They are not props. They are human beings."

Saying they represent the people of California who voted for Proposition 22, the successful 2000 ballot initiative that defined marriage as a man and a woman, the lawyers for the antigay groups repeatedly said since only a man and a woman can create a child, only heterosexual couples should be allowed to marry.

"The idea of marriage is naturally you want to bring children into the world. In a same-sex scenario, children can't come into the world," said Robert Tyler with the Alliance Defense Fund.

Randy Thomasson, executive

director of the Campaign for California Families, attacked the gay couples for bringing their lawsuit, implying they are grinch-like attempts to steal marriage from heterosexuals.

"Merry Christmas, the homosexual activists want to steal marriage and disenfranchise your vote," said Thomasson, whose group pushed the Proposition 22 measure. "No judge has a rational basis to destroy marriage. This case is about voter rights. It is a brazen attack against the vote of the people."

"It is outrageous to think that a man and woman marriage is somehow wrong or unconstitutional," he added. "It's a no brainer. If you don't have a man and a woman then you don't have marriage."

Allred, saying, "We have a response to that," led the same-sex couples in singing "We Shall Overcome."

Later in the day at a second press conference after the hearing had been continued to Thursday, Chung said those who wish to deny her family equal rights could learn a lesson from her daughter.

"She is strong and brave. In school she is learning about mutual respect and how to listen from the heart. Today, she could teach a lot of adults about that," said Chung. "I wish the other side could see us, see our family and what we are, and then I wonder if they could say the same about same-sex couples raising children." ▼



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Role models

by Jim Provenzano

British powerlifter Chris Morgan has been named as the latest of many ambassadors to Gay Games VII.

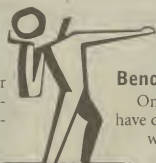
Unlike other ambassadors, Morgan remains actively competing in the sport of powerlifting, and has also competed and won medals at the past two Gay Games (silver in Amsterdam in 1998, gold at Sydney's Gay Games VI).

Morgan also won a silver medal at the World Drug-Free Powerlifting Championships held in Atlanta last month. "I believe that it's time that gay athletes who compete at the elite level are open and honest about their sexual orientation while still active in their sport careers," Morgan said. "We've lived in the shadows for too long, and we are missing a whole generation of gay athletes in the world of sport. This is not only due to fear of homophobia, but also because of the perceived lack of funding, support, and sponsor endorsements for professional athletes who decide to come out. It's time for that to change, and the Gay Games are contributing to making those changes possible."

Morgan joins former baseball player Billy Bean, former football

player Esera Tuaolo, figure skater Rudy Galindo, and other notables who have been named as ambassadors. Singer Melissa Etheridge was named as an ambassador shortly before revealing her struggle with breast cancer.

Patricia Nell Warren, author of *The Front Runner* trilogy – about a gay track athlete – and other books, was named honorary chairperson of the track and field events.



Benched

One person who may have disagreed with Morgan won't be making any contrary comments again. Reggie White, the former Green Bay Packers and Philadelphia Eagles NFL player who called homosexuality a "deathstyle," has died at the age of 43. The cause of death was said to be a respiratory illness.

The so-called Minister of Defense was honored and lauded for his athletic prowess as one of the NFL's most accomplished defensive linemen.

In his off-season, he worked with inner-city kids and "to bridge the racial and economic divide," one news article said.

Most all obituaries minimized or glossed over the ridiculous statements White made in March 1998, and as his fundamentalist



Be strong: Chris Morgan, competing at Sydney's Gay Games VI

religious convictions took precedence over logic.

While other homophobic professional athletes have made headlines for their comments to the press, or in locker rooms, White had the distinction of spouting a litany of racist and homophobic stereotypes worthy of an episode of *The Chapel Show*, to no less than the Wisconsin Legislature.

The then-ordained Baptist minister was supposed to talk about his community work and a recent trip to Israel, for a few minutes. White's nearly hourlong speech also included remarks on homosexuality, race, and slavery that turned the Assembly's applause to stunned silence.

White said the United States has gotten away from God, in part by allowing homosexuality to "run rampant."

"Homosexuality is a decision, it's not a race," White said. "People from all different ethnic backgrounds live in this lifestyle. But people from all different ethnic backgrounds also are liars and

cheaters and malicious and backstabbing."

White also expounded on his cartoon vision of why God created different races, saying that blacks are gifted at worship and celebration. "If you go to a black church, you see people jumping up and down because they really get into it," he said.

"Hispanics were gifted in family structure," White also said. "You can see a Hispanic person, and they can put 20, 30 people in one home."

White also noted that Asians are inventive, and "can turn a television into a watch," White said. "When you put all of that together, guess what it makes: It forms a complete image of God," White said.

Assembly Minority Leader Walter Kunicki (D-Milwaukee) was stunned by White's speech. "This is the first time I've been at a loss for words," he said in a news article documenting the event. "You could still tell from the tension in the room that much of this was offensive."

After being criticized by thousands, White called his remarks "a slip of the tongue."

A year later, he "slipped" again, at a rally sponsored by antigay activist Bill Horn held in Des Moines, Iowa to protest a statewide executive order banning antigay discrimination. White, by then retired, told the crowd that "every black person in America should be offended that a group of people should want the same civil rights because of their sexual orientation."

next page ►

UPCOMING EVENTS

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For more information, visit www.gaygameschicago.org. ▼

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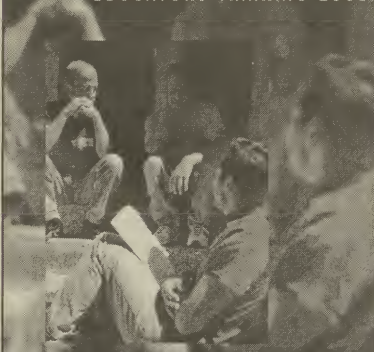
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COMMUNITY NEWS

Sports Complex

◀ previous page

entation."

White was also criticized for wearing his team uniform in a series of newspaper ads for Exodus that pushed similar statements. After that fallout, White complained that some gays have been intolerant of his intolerance. The

headline for the ad was appropriately titled, "Foul!"

White will undoubtedly be guaranteed a posthumous place in the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

"I know there must be a river of tears in Knoxville, Philadelphia, and Green Bay today," wrote *Sports Illustrated* columnist Peter King of White's demise.

An equal sigh of relief echoes in other cities, sir. ▼

DP law

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pre-registration agreements before registering as domestic partners. Post-registration agreements are available but carry stricter standards.

Prior to January 1, couples can dissolve their partnerships by filing a Notice of Termination of Domestic Partnership with the secretary of state.

After January 1, dissolving a domestic partnership becomes more difficult and must be done through the courts. The only exception is where both partners have no children, have been registered for less than five years, own no property, have no new debts since registering, have less than \$30,000 in assets, and have executed an agreement about how assets and property are to be divided.

Domestic partners may be almost as good as spouses in the

eyes of California, but outside the state, there is no guarantee that such a partnership will be recognized. Thus, even registered partners are advised to have a will, power of attorney, and other documents in place before traveling.

Still, for all the automatic rights granted through entering into a domestic partnership, it doesn't get better than California's law, and registering likely will prove to be the safest, quickest way to obtain immediate protections.

Domestic partnership registration forms are available at www.ss.ca.gov/dpregistry/ or at any local county registrar's office or office of the California Secretary of State.

Couples must sign the form in the presence of a notary and have it notarized and then mail the form along with a \$10 fee to the secretary of state.

For more information about the law, visit www.ncrights.org or www.eqca.org. ▼

Marriage case

◀ page 1

about," said Kramer.

Kramer also took issue with language used in briefs filed by two antigay groups, the Alliance Defense Fund which is representing the Proposition 22 Education and Legal Defense Fund and the Campaign for California Families. In their court filings, the groups state "marriage is always between a man and a woman."

Speaking to the lawyers for the two groups, Kramer said, "Always? That's a little too broad don't you think? Everywhere? Anywhere? That proposed fact is a little large."

Arguing on behalf of 12 same-sex couples denied marriage licenses, Shannon Minter with the National Center for Lesbian Rights said his clients are not seeking special rights; they only seek the same rights as heterosexual couples receive.

"These couples want nothing more, nothing less than what every other couple in California receives," said Minter. "By excluding same-sex couples from marriage, the state stigmatizes their relationships and thereby encourages private discrimination as well. This situation makes it much more difficult for same-sex couples even within their own extended families. The marriage ban sends a particularly negative message to children that their family is lesser in the eyes of the state."

Minter also argued that because marriage has historically been limited to heterosexuals is no reason to continue to deny homosexuals the right to marry.

"According to the attorney general, however, same-sex couples do not have a fundamental right to marry for no other reason than because the state has excluded them from marriage in the past. But that argument is merely a restatement of the very issue before the court. It is circular reasoning, not analysis, to maintain that marriage must be limited only to heterosexual couples merely because it has been so limited in the past," he said. "And even if the state's argument might have had some credibility a hundred years ago or perhaps even 20 years ago, the assertion that marriage is inherently or by definition heterosexual can no longer be maintained now that a growing number of jurisdictions permit same-sex couples to marry, including Massachusetts, the Netherlands, Belgium, Canada, most recently, South Africa, and very soon to be included, Spain."

The institution of marriage, maintained Minter, is rapidly evolving worldwide to include lesbian and gay people, just as it has evolved in the past to provide equality for married women, to encompass interracial marriages, and to provide for no-fault divorce.

"As the courts and legislatures in these jurisdictions have concluded, there simply is nothing inherent in marriage that prevents same-sex couples from participating equally in it," he said. "Accordingly, the state must rely on something other than circular reasoning—or a mere invocation of tradition—to justify its position. This is particularly so given that the state acknowledges, as it must, in light of AB205, that lesbian and gay couples are similarly situated to heterosexual couples in their need for the rights and protections of marriage."

Chief Deputy City Attorney Therese Stewart argued that the court should not look at it as heterosexual marriage versus homosexual marriage, but if the state has a right to deny homosexuals



CCF attorney Rena Lindevaldsen

from marrying.

"The state argues same-sex marriage is not rooted in our tradition and is therefore not a right," said Stewart. "We are talking about the right to marry, including the right to choose the one person you want to marry."

When the state Legislature adopted language in 1997 that made marriage a union between a man and a woman, Stewart argued the lawmakers did so to exclude gay men and lesbians from marriage. But merely because the lawmakers passed the exclusion does not mean it is lawful to do so, she said.

"Tradition is a nice, soft, fuzzy word because it sounds so good. The state is not talking about the tradition of heterosexual persons to marry. The state is talking about the tradition of excluding gays and lesbians from marriage," she said. "The state is saying because a change would be uncomfortable for some people then the law should be upheld."

But slavery and women denied the right to vote were traditions either struck down by the courts or changed by lawmakers, Stewart argued, and thus, traditions should not be seen as set in stone. Even marriage has changed—no longer does the woman become the property of the man once married nor are interracial marriages banned.

"These changes made to marriage haven't destroyed or diminished the institution. Instead, they have made it more relevant to today's society," said Stewart. "It really isn't a brand new change—in the eyes of the world, several countries allow gays to marry."

Gloria Allred, an attorney for two Los Angeles couples who sued the state after they were denied marriage licenses last February 12, argued that tradition cannot justify discrimination.

"Refusing to give a marriage license to people of the same gender is a denial of their rights," she said.

Allred also argued that the state's domestic partnership system is not only separate but unequal to marriage and therefore not a justification for denying same-sex couples the right to marry.

"It is time to end second-class citizenship inherent in that relationship," she said.

The lawyer for several same-sex couples whose marriages were ruled invalid by the Supreme Court likened the ban on gay marriage to state-sanctioned arranged marriages.

"The state should not reach into our homes and choose our partners. It is bad enough when our parents do that," said Waukeen McCoy.

Lawyers representing state Attorney General Bill Lockyer told the judge the matter should be left to the Legislature and the public to decide, pointing to how lawmakers in Sacramento will be debating a marriage bill during their new session come January and an effort is under way to put a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage before voters.

"The Legislature is hard at work on these matters but it isn't changing the definition of marriage because it understands that is rooted in what the public understands marriage to mean," argued Louis Mauro, senior assistant attorney general. "This should be carefully addressed in public debates and policy; it should not be decided in a courtroom. The court should not jump ahead of the legislative process."

With the sweeping domestic partnership law AB205 set to take effect January 1, giving domestic partners nearly all the same rights the state affords to married couples, Mauro said the state cannot be viewed as discriminating against gay couples.

"California is a leader in affording rights. AB205 requires the same rights and benefits be afforded to domestic partners as are spouses," he said. "The issue here is solely whether it offends the constitution to give those rights without calling it marriage. And the answer is no."

Kramer interrupted Mauro at one point to ask, "Do I look at the whole package and say, all right, this combination of laws is good enough?"

"You have to look at the whole package," responded Mauro.

Mauro also addressed the city's and gay rights lawyers' comments about not relying on tradition.

"There is a misunderstanding of what we mean in talking about tradition. We are not the ones making that up," said Mauro. "State law says marriage is a contract between a man and a woman, that is what this court must uphold. Our marriage laws are not in breach of social norms. They are in accordance with social norms."

Glen Lavy, an attorney with the Alliance Defense Fund, said the case is not about existing rights but about creating new rights.

"If this court redefines marriage then why not allow a brother to marry his sister or a parent to marry their child to avoid inheritance taxes?" he asked. "Why does the state license marriages and not intimate relationships? The state still has an interest maintaining children growing up with their own parents. Without marriage the human race would become extinct."

Rena Lindevaldsen, an attorney for Campaign for California Families, said if the state were to allow gays to marry, it would mean more straight couples would have children out of wedlock. She also implied that since there are no studies showing what the impact of being raised by a same-sex couple is on children, it is premature to move forward with gay marriage.

"It is not a proven family structure," she said.

Responding to those arguments, deputy city attorney Sheri Sokeland Kaiser said the procreation argument is a shell game.

"They don't have a monopoly on making children," she said, noting that through adoption, sperm donation, and other methods gays and lesbians can become parents.

"To hear them tell it, the city and same-sex couples are out to destroy marriage and steal children away from their parents. None of that is on our homosexual agenda, at least not today," she said. "We want to protect our own children, not steal away theirs. Instead of heading toward extinction, gay and lesbian couples are having more children today."

Both sides will submit supplemental briefings to the judge on January 14. He will then have 90 days to issue his ruling in the matter. ▼

STD e-card site

◀ page 16

man and CEO in a December news release. "As a community-focused company, we've been offering social networking since our founding nearly 10 years ago."

Officials at PlanetOut did not return calls specifically responding to the STD issue.

Officials at Steamworks bathhouse in Berkeley did not return calls seeking comment.

Steamworks' Web site boasts complete STD counseling and out-

reach with the Berkeley Health Department and "Mr. Sex," an MFT intern for walk-in counseling—"a confidential place to talk about ... self-esteem, body image."

The bottom of Craigslist's men for men page features a question and answer section for increased STD risk with multiple partners that is led by an ISIS-funded nurse practitioner. The disadvantage of Craigslist's structure is that the way the site is set up, e-mails disappear after a few days.

"If you want to get in touch with someone, it's fairly impossible," Levine said. ▼

Minister

◀ page 17

While Stroud was initially concerned that an appeal might serve to further polarize members of the international Methodist community, she ultimately determined that the church as a whole needs to wrestle further with the issue of conscience.

"The UMC laws on homosexuality were adopted by majority vote in general conference," she explained. "But how do we live together as a church community when a significant minority views the decision barring lesbian and gay men from ministry as morally wrong? How do you honor the minority and hold the church together?"

Stroud held off announcing her decision until after she spent a "wonderful, quiet Christmas" with her parents, her lesbian sister, and her sister's pregnant partner. "We're looking forward to watching the documentary with Chris's parents and becoming aunts in a couple of months," she said.

The weeks since the verdict have proven "very different and very hard," said Stroud. The first Sunday that she preached in street clothes and processed into the sanctuary without her vestments, she felt the pain of her "very significant loss."

"I felt similar on Christmas Eve," she said. "Just before leading the service for children ages 2-6, I was close to tears. But with the

help of encouraging words from my colleague the Reverend Fred Day, I was able to go forward."

The case now goes to an appeals panel of the Northeastern Jurisdiction, which covers 12 states plus the District of Columbia. The hearing should begin within 150 days.

If the Northeastern Jurisdiction decides that the initial trial procedure that barred sympathetic jury members and refused to hear arguments concerning the Methodist Church Constitution was incorrect, it could either order a second Pennsylvania trial or refer questions on interpretation to the church's national Judicial Council. Either way, the 1984 Methodist General Conference's gay ban will become the subject of renewed intensive dialogue among Christians worldwide.

"If ultimately, civil society is going to change and accept, include, and honor all loving families and people," said Stroud, "the church is going to have to be involved in that change."

"It's very often in the church that people's hearts, minds, and values are changed. Even in churches where the official rules say something else, the teachings of the church continue to shape people who value inclusion." ▼

Locally, the PBS documentary, *The Congregation*, airs December 29 at 9:30 p.m. on KQED Channel 9.

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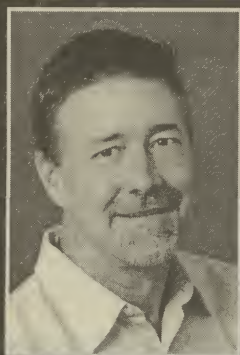
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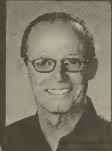


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LEGAL NOTICES

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO



HOURLY WORKERS IN SF GETTING A RAISE - MINIMUM WAGE TO INCREASE ON JANUARY 1, 2005
The City's minimum wage will be adjusted from \$8.50 to \$8.62 per hour effective January 1, 2005. The required rate for small businesses with less than ten workers and non-profits will be \$7.75 per hour.

The Minimum Wage Ordinance, passed by the voters in November 2003, calls for annual rate adjustments based on the previous year's Consumer Price Index. In 2006, all employers including small businesses and nonprofits will be subject to the minimum wage rate of \$8.62 per hour as adjusted.

This week, the City has included a multilingual poster announcing the new minimum wage rates with the annual business tax mailing to 94,000 registered businesses. Every employer is required to post the notice in their workplace to inform employees of their rights under the ordinance.

Since the implementation of the Minimum Wage Ordinance in February 2004, the City's Office of Labor Standards Enforcement has recovered over \$33,000 for workers who were paid less than the minimum wage. Additional information regarding San Francisco's Minimum Wage Ordinance can be found at www.sfgov.org/olse or by calling (415) 554-6292.

INVITATION FOR BIDS FOR EXTERIOR DECK REPLACEMENT AND PAINTING AT POTRERO ANNEX AND WESTBROOK -
Solicitation No: 04-620-IFB-037

The San Francisco Housing Authority will receive sealed bids for Exterior Deck Repair and Painting at Potrero Annex, CAL 10 and Westbrook Apartments, CAL 1-9. Construction cost ranges from \$350,000 to \$400,000.
On Tuesday January 11, 2005, at 10:00 AM, a site inspection will be held at the Housing Development. Prospective bidders will meet in front of 120-135 Northridge Road, Westbrook, San Francisco.

Responses are due 2:00 PM, on Thursday, January 20, 2005. The IFB document is available at the Authority's office at 1815 Egbert Avenue, San Francisco. A processing fee of \$50.00 (non-refundable) will be required for each set of documents. All payments must be in the form of Certified Check, Cashier's Check, or Company Check payable to the San Francisco Housing Authority. Cash or personal checks are not acceptable. Contact Ms. Carolina Penate-Larrea, at (415) 715-3171, e-mail penatec@sflha.org.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR FINANCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES

The San Francisco Housing Authority is soliciting Proposals from experienced firms, which advise public housing authorities on HOPE VI and other real estate development activities, to provide as-needed Financial Advisory Services on an as-needed basis, with a total contract amount not to exceed \$200,000.

Proposals are due by 2:00 PM on Tuesday, January 18, 2005. The RFP document may be obtained by e-mail from Brenda Moore, mooreb@sflha.org, 415-715-3210, or download at <http://www.ci.sf.ca.us/sflha/prcmtnt/current.htm>.

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Filing Deadline: Friday, January 14, 2005
Phone: (415) 554-7469. EOE/TTY

STATEMENT FILE A-0281235-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: No Mercy Ink, 155 12th Street San Francisco, Ca. 94103. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Jason Peterson. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/06/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/06/04.
DEC.9,16,23,30 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0281072-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Sunset Plumbing, 1858 45th Ave. San Francisco, Ca. 94122. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Yehuda Golani. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 03/01/95. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/01/04.
DEC.9,16,23,30 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280886-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Bernal Bike, 1637 Florida Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94110. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Henry F. Kroyer. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/20/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/19/04.
DEC.16,23,30 2004 JAN. 6, 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0281284-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: LoLo Cup, 2527 San Bruno Ave., San Francisco, Ca. 94134. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed James Hin. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/01/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/08/04.
DEC.16,23,30 2004 JAN. 6 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0281215-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Photos By Maurice, 556 Arlington Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94112. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Maurice Magnan. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/06/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/08/04.
DEC.16,23,30 2004 JAN. 6, 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0281545-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Kim Phong, 730 Larkin Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94109. This business is conducted by a general partnership, signed by Nu To Ngo Tran. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/20/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/20/04.
DEC.23,30 2004 JAN. 6, 13 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0281018-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Mor King Spas, 250 Napoleon Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94124. This business is conducted by an individual, signed David Pallenberg. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/19/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/19/04.
DEC. 23, 30 2004 JAN. 6, 13 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0281452-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: The Odd Pod, #167th Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94103. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Darick Agudelo. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/15/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/15/04.
DEC.30 2004 JAN. 6, 13, 20 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0281611-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Fog Towne Cafe, 1155 Market Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94103. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Kwok Pang. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/22/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/23/04.
DEC.30 2004 JAN. 6, 13, 20 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0281580-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: H and T 99 cents and over, 2706 24th Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94110. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Truong Sam T. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/22/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/22/04.
DEC.30 2004 JAN. 6, 13, 20 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0281499-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Jurislex Development Company. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed MH Marshall. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/16/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/17/04.
DEC.30 2004 JAN. 6, 13, 20 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0281452-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: ABC Builders, 667 5th Ave. San Francisco, Ca. 94118. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Jing Hua Yie Agudelo. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/07/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/15/04.
DEC.30 2004 JAN. 6, 13, 20 2005

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LEGAL NOTICES

STATEMENT FILE A-0281452-00
The following person(s) are doing business
as: Thomas Livingston Antiques, 550
Jackson Street, San Francisco, Ca.
94133. This business is conducted by a
general partnership, signed Thomas Liv-
ingston. The registrant(s) commenced to
transact business under the above listed
fictitious business name or names on
06/15/77. The statement was filed with
the City and County of San Francisco, Ca.
on 12/15/04.
DEC.30 2004 JAN. 6, 13, 20 2005

**NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR
CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OF AL-
COHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE**
To whom it may concern: The Name of
the Applicant(s) is/are: Huang Jainye,
Tran Hghi Hung, Tran Nu To Ngo, and
Xie Zaoliang. The applicants listed
above are applying to the Department of
Alcoholic Beverage Control at 185
Berry Street, Suite #5600 San Francis-
co, Ca 94107, to sell alcoholic bever-
ages at: 730 Larkin Street, San Francis-
co, Ca 94109. Type of License applied
for:
**41-ON-SALE BEER AND WINE -
EATING PLACE**
DEC. 30, 2004

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND
FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRAN-
CISCO FILE # CNC 04541678**
In the matter of the application of
Don Garth Olson for change of
name. The application of Don
Garth Olson for change of name
having been filed in Court, and it
appearing from said application
that Don Garth Olson has filed an
application proposing that his/her
name be changed to Don Carlo
Parenti. Now therefore, it is here-
by ordered, that all persons
interested in said matter do appear
before this Court in Department
218 on the 24th day of February,
2005 at 9:00 am of said day to
show cause why the application for
change of name should not be
granted.
DEC. 30 2004 JAN. 6, 13, 20 200

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LEGAL
NOTICES

CITY AND COUNTY
OF SAN FRANCISCO
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
#290

Dear Potential Applicant:
The City and County of San Francisco
Human Services Agency (HSA), is seeking
qualified non-profit agencies and/or indi-
viduals to provide a Pilot Meals Program for
Disabled Younger Adults. The Pilot Meals
Program will provide meals to disabled in-
dividuals between the ages of 18 and 59.
The contract period will be March 1, 2005
through June 30, 2005 (pilot period) with a
renewal option from July 1, 2005 through
June 30, 2006 contingent upon the success
of the program and funding availability.
An RFQ packet may be picked up at HSA,
Office of Contract Management, 1650 Mis-
sion Street, Suite 300 on or after December
20, 2004. Office hours are from 8:30 AM to
5 PM. RFQ packets and subsequent updates
will also be available on the City's website.
Go to
[HTTP://SUNSETCLSFCA.US/PIBIDS.NSF](http://SUNSETCLSFCA.US/PIBIDS.NSF)
NSF and click on the "Consultants and Pro-
fessional Services" link.
The Respondents' Conference will be held
on Wednesday, January 5, 2005 at 9:00am
at 1650 Mission St., Suite 300, SF, CA. For
further information, call Esperanza Zapien,
at (415) 557-5657. Due date for responses
is Tuesday, January 18, 2005 at 3:00 PM.

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND
FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRAN-
CISCO FILE # CNC 04541638**
In the matter of the application of
Leslie Anne Carter for change of name.
The application of Leslie Anne Carter
for change of name having been filed in
Court, and it appearing from said applica-
tion that Leslie Anne Carter has
filed an application proposing that
his/her name be changed to Gabrielle
Anne Carter. Now therefore, it is here-
by ordered, that all persons interested
in said matter do appear before this
Court in Department 218 on the 15th
day of February, 2005 at 9:00 am of
said day to show cause why the applica-
tion for change of name should not be
granted.
DEC. 30, 2004 JAN. 6, 13, 20 2005

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NOTICES

HAPPY HOLIDAYS JULIAN!
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 Thank YOU.

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There's a place for us
'West Side Story' and other classic musical films play week's run at the Castro Theatre.
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Leather fantasia
The year-end dreams of columnist Mister Marcus.
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Drama queens
Year's highlights on the Bay Area's theater stages.
page 28



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 34 • No. 53 • 30 December 2004

2004: That's a wrap!

The year's top 10 queer films

by David Lamble

Bad Education Gael Garcia Bernal is brilliant in this latest exhibit from Pedro Almodovar's cinema of men behaving badly. Finally, a queer *Vertigo*! A triple-barreled homage to Hitchcock, Billy Wilder and Almodovar himself, it's inspired by a scene in his 1986 dark comedy *Law of Desire*.

Bad Education sizzles with an electric triple-role from Bernal. The actor demonstrates why pretty straight boys make the hottest and deadliest girls. Everything you may have wished from Stanwyck and MacMurray in *Double Indemnity* is here provided by Bernal and his incendiary co-star Fele Martinez, including a full-frontal wet jockey-short shot and a reprise of Bernal's underwear ballet from *Y Tu Mama*. Almodovar warns that his characters regard sex not as "a source of pleasure, but one of pain for everyone else."

A rendition of "Moon River" that transcends parody by a no-longer-virginal altar boy invokes the Catholic priest scandal. *Bad Education* is a loopy valentine to a society

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A scene from *Bad Education*

The year in gay pornography



Butch Taylor and Rick Valentine in *Wet*, part of the best reissue of the year.

Karrnal Knowledge wrap-up, part 1

by John F. Karr

The year-end wrap-up is gonna wrap around the year-end this year. I just have too much to say. So "The Best, the Worst, and the Ones I Missed" will come next week. First, here are three really grungy films that are the year's most choice reissue.

It's reassuring to know that modern psychiatry no longer views fetishism as a perversion, but as paraphilia. That's *para*, to the side of, and *philia*, love. One major bit of paraphilia evokes in many men a love that's as true as true love, and that's watersports — the sport that showers golden love on all sides of a lucky pisse.

My first encounter with the extended orgasmic feel of a piss-spray came from a fellow who neglected to tell me of his intention. What a surprise it was when he hit me with a major jet. And it wasn't *para*, baby, but right smack down the middle of my throat. An even bigger surprise was that he'd been drinking red wine all evening. What a sweet, burgundy-tasting brew it was that he down-

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SECOND OF TWO SECTIONS

Slow news day, hot arts night

by Roberto Friedman

Here's just another year-end list, even one with a twist. Enumerating the books, CDs, and live performances that got us going (and coming back for more) last year, we'll step back intermittently and editorialize. We just can't help ourselves.

It's true what 17th-century drama queen **William Congreve** once said, "Music has charms to soothe a savage breast," or at least this savage breast. But along with that soothing breast, Out There has an unquenchably thirsty ear. Here's some of what we poured in.

A Boot and a Shoe - **Sam Phillips** (Nonesuch)

A Foreign Sound - **Caetano Veloso** (Nonesuch)

Genius Loves Company - **Ray Charles** (Concord)

The Grind Date - **De La Soul** (AOI/Sanctuary)

i, The Magnetic Fields (Nonesuch)

Live, A Fortnight in France - **Patricia Barber** (Blue Note)

Live in Tokyo - **Brad Mehldau** (Nonesuch)

Lonely Planet Boy - **Jobriath** (Sanctuary)

Medulla - **Bjork** (Elektra)

No Danger - **Inouk** (Say Hey)

Paseo - **Gonzalo Rubalcaba, New Cuban Quartet** (Blue Note)

Want Two - **Rufus Wainwright** (Geffen)

White People - **Handsome Boy Modeling School** (Atlantic)

You Are the Quarry - **Morrissey** (Attack)

Book 'em, Dano

Out There hopes our readers have got a good thing going on under their covers, because much of the beautiful bounty we've discovered this last calendar year has been sandwiched between covers, cardboard ones.

There's more to life than books, you know, but not much more. (Clue for the young 'uns: That's a **Smiths** lyric.) Here's the best printed matter by the bedside.

Barracks Bad Boys - Authentic Accounts of Sex in the Armed Forces, ed. **Alex Buchman** (Harrington Park Press)

Beautiful Shadow - A Life of Patricia Highsmith by **Andrew Wilson** (Bloomsbury)

Exhibitionism by **Christopher Makos** (powerHouse Books)

The Line of Beauty by **Alan Hollinghurst** (Bloomsbury)

Lust Unearthed - *Vintage Gay Graphics from the DuBek Collection* by **Thomas Waugh** with

Willie Walker (Arsenal Pulp Press)

The Master by **Colm Toibín** (Scribner)

modern words no. 8, ed. **Garland Richard Kyle** (modern words)*

Wake Up, Sir! by **Jonathan Ames** (Scribner)

*Full disclosure: We're a contributor to this "thoroughly queer literary journal" under our civilian name. Well, it's always good to have a hobby.

it especially if you're into uniforms.

On the naval-uniform front, it was hard to beat **San Francisco Opera's** production of **Benjamin Britten's** classic opera about a certain swell bare-chested seaman. Here's our three favorite nights at the opera this year.



Nathan Gunn was hard to beat.

Billy Budd - **Nathan Gunn**, **Budd; Phillip Ens**, **Claggart**; **Donald Runnicles**, cond., SFO.

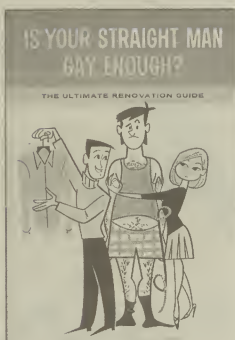
Eugene Onegin - "Habits are a gift from heaven, a substitute for happiness." - Peasant women's refrain, **Act I, Scene i**; **Elena Prokina**, **Tatyana**; **Ilan Volkov**, cond., SFO.

Le Grand Macabre - **Willard White**, **Nekrotzar**; **Graham Clark**, **Piet the Pot**; **Michael Boder**, cond., SFO.

Straight = Gay in training

We suppose the premise of *Is Your Straight Man Gay Enough? The Ultimate Renovation Guide* (by **Nan Shipley** and **Jason Anthony**; Chronicle Books) isn't really as offensive as one might think at first impression. Certainly the illustration of a gal's straight guy arranging flowers in a sensitive way (they can be trained) is cute enough.

But we don't like the guide's division of all straight males into



three basic types: **Way Too Straight** (WTS), **Just Gay Enough** (JGE) and **Straight Man at Risk** (SMAR). OK, part of this does get the male mind right: WTS' brain is represented by a pie-chart basically broken into thirds: "Sports," "Sex" and "Food"; there is the tiniest sliver of "Other."

On the other hand, JGE's pie-chart looks like wishful thinking: "You" is the biggest pie-slice. But here's the premise that gets us: "A man suffering from SMARS, or Straight Man at Risk syndrome, can be difficult to distinguish from a gay man." His pie-chart is a smorgasbord of sushi and **Ver-sace**, **Tom Cruise** and *Sex and the City*. Golly, SMARS man sounds so dated, doesn't he? Maybe he's not so much at risk of being gay as of opening his mind up to new possibilities. We think this guide missed another type: the straight guy who may decide for himself just how gay he wants to get.

Good riddance

This is the year Out There phoned up another *BAR* byline and connected telephonically to her just as she was going to her dial-up modem (which is so, like, 1985). So our voice mysteriously came through her computer's speakers: "Victoria? Victoria? Are you there?"

Oh, it was awful, our stentorian tones droning on through her computer as she and her girlfriend looked on in abject horror. "Make it stop!" pled the gf.

Anyway, that's how Out There felt about 2004: Please, dear god, make it stop! And now it finally has. Here's to 2005: At least it's not 2004. ▼

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MUSIC & DANCE

Star recitals & standout performances

Best of the year's classical music & dance in the Bay Area

by Stephanie von Buchau

I don't mind writing *Best 10 of the Year* columns, but sometimes there's not enough "best of" to write about. 2004 was one of those years. Even though I couldn't find 10 operas, recitals and/or classical dance events that totally blew me away, the following were all pretty damn good.

First, Phil Campbell has to forgive me for poaching his preserves, but in April at Davies Symphony Hall, **Yuri Temirkanov** blazed through the Shostakovich Seventh with the San Francisco Symphony. In November, the Russian maestro was back for three incandescent concerts with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic. Invite this guy every year, and ask him to play Prokofiev's complete *Romeo and Juliet* next time.

A few star recitals lived up to their billing: **Deborah Voigt**, sans

ing on this month, that leaves Birgit Nilsson, aged 86, as the only living Titan of my operatic youth.

The two best opera performances I heard in 2004 were not only from two different SFO seasons (end of 2003-04, and beginning of 2004-05), but they were exact opposites. June's **Cunning Little Vixen** was nearly flawless.



Dawn Upshaw as the Vixen.

With a "modern concept" production that didn't involve any industrial waste, sick sex or 1920s German Expressionism, *Vixen* was a lovely, gentle treat. Dawn Upshaw (as the skittish Vixen) and Thomas Allen (as her unlikely gamekeeper swain) made a tender, touching pair. This was the Janacek-loving Pamela Rosenberg we'd like to remember.

I doubt if Rosenberg would take credit for the other standout, a thrilling, old-fashioned Verdian performance of *La Traviata*, conducted to perfection by Patrick Summers and sung magnificently by Ruth Ann Swenson, debutant Rolando Villazon and Dmitri Hvorostovsky. The Siberian baritone took heat for "walking" through the role of the elder Germont, but more than one opera queen (including this one) found Hvorostovsky's voice and demeanor ultra-sympathetic.

Probably not enough people saw my final hottie, Berkeley Opera's *The Legend of the Ring* in March. This "potted," three-and-a-half-hour reduction of Wagner's



Dmitri Hvorostovsky: sympathetic.

15-hour tetralogy, played by a 20-piece orchestra (including Wagner tubas) and sung by eight artists doubling and tripling their roles, was a revelation. I've never cried at Siegmund and Sieglinde's plight before, but here I did. It was swift, relevant and in your face. Berkeley Opera hoped it would "introduce" Wagner to people unwilling or unable to see all four operas, but I found it better for averts. We could luxuriate in the clever cuts, elisions and musico-dramatic arrangements of David Seaman's constantly astonishing revision.

Dance party

As for classical dance, there were two sensational full-length world premieres at San Francisco Ballet in 2004. Again, one was from last season, May's *Sylvia*, and the other from the upcoming dance year, *Nutcracker*. Helgi Tomasson's restaging of the holiday classic is entralling, especially the way he jettisoned the sticky, stomach-churning "Kingdom of Sweets," replacing it with "Clara's Dream," in which the girl poised on adulthood falls asleep with the ugly Nutcracker doll in her arms, only to awaken with him full-grown. She, too, transforms, and they dance the grand pas. (The Sugar Plum is relegated to "Waltz of the Flowers" duty.) Then, when you are still thrilling from Tomasson's bravura

romantic choreography, he whisks Clara back to the safety of her SF Victorian, where, still carrying the wooden doll, she embraces her worried mother. Absolute magic.

Satisfying as *Nutcracker* was, there hasn't been anything at SFB in years as sensational as Mark Morris' *Sylvia*. First he reintroduced us to a splendid piece of music by Delibes. Next he took an old-fashioned, 19th-century story, and played it straight. No irony, no deconstruction, no industrial waste or Holocaust reminders (are you listening, SFO?). Just humor, romance, scads of watchable ensemble choreography and meaty roles for the company's best

dancers. I saw it three times and wish it were back this season, but Tomasson promises it for 2006.

Morris also makes this list with the worst dance event of the year, his peculiar, endless *Violet Caravan*, to a hideous punk-jazz score that nearly had my companion bolting the theater. And over at SFS, again not my beat but an opera after all, Michael Tilson Thomas produced a so-so concert *Fidelio* with the worst spoken narration in the history of opera. Smug, preachy, embarrassing, apparently MTT wrote it himself. It's called "keep your day-job." Other than that, Mrs. Lincoln, we enjoyed the year, but we expect more out of 2005. ▼



Juan Diego Florez: prime-cut.

"little black dress" in May; **Juan Diego Florez**, sounding under the weather but still prime-cut in January; **Cecilia Bartoli** the next month, steam-rolling the bel canto as usual, but singing charming French rep; and **Kiri Te Kanawa**'s elegant song stylings in October, after which the Kiwi diva announced her retirement from opera. With Renata Tebaldi pass-

Best in the West

SF Symphony's landmark year

by Philip Campbell

The end of 2004 and the winter solstice coincide with the halfway mark for the San Francisco Symphony's current season. It has been a time of milestones and promises fulfilled for Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas. The new year should be even more exciting.

MTT is celebrating a decade on the podium at Davies Hall, and he is clearly making big plans for the future. While other orchestras wallow in debt and uncertainty, the SFS is sailing majestically on a wave of artistic integrity and star power.

Cutbacks in the arts, a shaky economy and a general malaise in the classical recording industry haven't slowed the momentum. With brilliant marketing, intelligent programming and an enthusiastic embrace of technology, the venerable Bay Area institution proves that there is still an enthusiastic audience, not only in Cali-



Michael Tilson Thomas: fulfilled.

fornia, but also the rest of the country. International fans are listening too, if awards and sales figures are any indication.

The monumental **Mahler** recording project — all nine symphonies caught live on the orchestra's own label — has just been recognized with yet another Grammy nomination. The Fourth, with soprano Laura Claycombe making an enchanting contribution, is vying in the strange category of Best Surround Sound Disc. It is the only classical recording among the five nominees!

Regardless of what we might think of the Grammy judges, there is no denying their impact on the market. To date, MTT and the SFS have partnered for six wins (including two for Mahler releases), and this is the third consecutive year for a nomination. Will it be a lucky seven awards in February?

Score card

We have also seen the launch of the innovative **Keeping Score: MTT on Music** series this year. The entertaining, informative five-year multimedia enterprise

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Beyond the planet of Broadway

2004 Bay Area theater wrap-up: old hands and new thrills

by Richard Dodds

Once upon a time, Newark, NJ, was a tryout town for Broadway shows. Only 15 minutes away by train, it was still sufficiently removed to let show-folks work on their projects without fear of premature coverage. It's not so easy anymore to fly under the radar of Broadway busybodies, whether they write for *The New York Times* or on a Yahoo chatboard.

The Bay Area, once prohibitively distant for tryout purposes, has been gaining popularity for New York-intended shows, partly because it's about as far away from Broadway as you can get and still be in the continental United States. So the big story of 2004 for Bay Area theater has to be the flowering of this phenomenon.

Of course, it also helps that the Bay Area is filled with avid theatergoers willing to take chances on unproven properties (helping us beat out LA). Among the shows these theatergoers helped launch were the beguiling *White Christmas* for Best of Broadway, *A Little Princess* and *Memphis* for The-

atreWorks, and *The Opposite of Sex* for the Magic.

None has yet made it to Broadway, a bit of a flaw in the tryout-town argument. But the fact is we get to share in the creative efforts of some of the brightest talents, both onstage and off, working in the musical theater today.

As 2004 is taking its last gasps, here are some of the other theatrical events that helped make the year memorable for at least one theatergoer.

New works

Erstwhile Sfer Adam Bock was back in town for the premiere of his play *Thursday* by Encore Theatre. The invitingly quirky play captured the minutia that can grow into the big stuff of daily life. Bock will be back in town in January with his off-Broadway play *The Typographer's Dream*.

Best-selling author Dave Eggers teamed with the Campo Santo theater company for *Sacramento*, a flavorfully picaresque play about two friends on a globe-trotting search for identity. Great performances by Danny Wolohan and Sean San Jose as the adulthood-resisting buddies.

The Magic Theatre landed the world premiere of David Mamet's *Dr. Faustus*, directed by the playwright himself. But it turned out to be something of a Faustian bargain as the peculiarly contrived dialogue was rendered inert by Mamet's direction.

Liz Duffy Adams created a fascinating post-apocalyptic world for Shotgun Players' *Dog Act*, in which the survivors have grabbed bits and pieces of the lost civilization to cobble together, often amusingly, new languages and customs.

Star turns

Olympia Dukakis did some dedicated scenery-chewing to help spark *A Mother*, a new adaptation of a Gorky play at ACT about a Russian matriarch from Hell.

Rita Moreno was an excellent Maria Callas in Terrence McNally's *Master Class* at Berkeley Rep, directed by Moises Kaufman (*The Laramie Project*).



Marianne Faithfull: grueling sked.

And even though she didn't perform matinees here, she still dropped out of the upcoming Sydney run, citing her "grueling" SF schedule.



Donald Currie: endearing style.



Carol Channing: Hello, 80s!

Carol Channing, now in her 80s, was at the Geary for a remarkably spry and often hilarious performance of song and stories, from her childhood days in SF to her current happiness with a new husband (and former childhood sweetheart), with whom she did a soft shoe.

Lea DeLaria, dyke comic and Broadway character actress, returned to SF with an unabashedly broad performance as Princess Winnifred in *Once Upon a Mattress* presented by 42nd Street Moon. She's like a Martha Raye with an Ethel Merman voice.

Rock-and-roll survivor Marianne Faithfull proved a large part of the allure of *The Black Rider* at ACT, though she wound up with busy work to help build up what is essentially a supporting role.

Flying solo

Donald Currie, something like a beat-poet version of Wallace Shawn, offered his take on growing up gay in SF, and how he stumbled through the gay revolution, with wit and an endearing performance style in *Sex & Mayhem* at New Conservatory Theatre Center.

Ingratating NY performer Mike Albo came to Theatre Rhino with *Spray*, his funny and sharp look at life in a consumer-driven society, as seen by a neo-hippie.

Eve Ensler, who created *The Vagina Monologues*, took on flabby bellies in *The Good Body* at ACT. The material wasn't nearly as provocative or fresh, and its move to Broadway didn't fare so well.



Berkeley Rep's Polk County blues.

Old but new

Zora Neale Hurston completed *Polk County* in 1944, but there was no production, and the script was then forgotten. Berkeley Rep, in partnership with the McCarter Theatre, has given the blues musical a lovely new production populated with a first-rate cast.

ACT brought in the wondrous Steppenwolf production of *The Time of Your Life*. The 1939 William Saroyan play was superbly cast, sharply directed, and breathtakingly designed. Really, a once-in-a-lifetime theatrical experience.

Unconventional director Anne Bogart created a singular version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for San Jose Rep. Working with only eight actors and a bare stage, she was still able to create theatrical magic anew from the Shakespeare comedy.

On the road

The Lion King found a welcoming home at the Orpheum Theatre, and Julie Taymor's amazing morphing of actors and animals worked every bit as well as it does on Broadway.

Hairspray, the gayest musical without a single gay character, breezed into town with its good vibes and addictive melodies. Bruce Vilanch, in the Divine/Harvey Fierstein role, didn't seem to have the right star persona, but the producers saw it differently. He's graduated to the Broadway company.

And then there's *Take Me Out*, the gays-in-baseball drama still at the Golden Gate. Playwright Richard Greenberg tells an entertaining story of high drama, low comedy, and a bunch of nekkid men trying not to drop the soap in the shower. ▼

Richard Dodds can be reached at BARstage@aol.com.

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SF Symphony

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includes websites, educational outreach, DVDs, radio concerts and continuing television broadcasts. Not since the wonderful Leonard Bernstein's *Young People's Concerts* has there been such an encouraging effort to bring classical music to a new generation.

Classical radio station KDFC 102.1 FM still broadcasts the Symphony's subscription concerts on Tuesday evenings, another excellent way for novices to become acquainted with the ongoing excitement of MTT's tenure.

In the new year, he will lead performances of Janacek's thrilling *Glagolitic Mass* (with Vance George's fabulous Chorus)

and his own composition, *Island Music* (Jan. 6, 7 & 8). The next week features Beethoven and Schoenberg. Smack-dab in the middle of that series comes another major event.

On January 13, 2005, a celebrity salute to MTT will honor the maestro on his 60th birthday. Old friends and new like Frederica von Stade, Thomas Hampson, Audra McDonald and Renee Fleming will join for a gala evening onstage and a post-concert party.

Tilson Thomas seems to be the Energizer bunny of conductors, and it's difficult to believe he is actually growing older. Hard on the heels of the festive tribute, he will be heading for Southern California with the orchestra on a tour of Los Angeles, San Diego, Costa Mesa, Santa Barbara and Palm

Desert. The LA concert will be in the new Walt Disney Concert Hall, and features Mahler's Symphony No. 9.

When MTT returns from his old hometown, he will manage a break while his handpicked Concertmaster, Alexander Barantschik, takes the reins temporarily. The violinist will conduct and play along with fellow orchestra members Catherine Payne, piccolo, and William Bennett, oboe.

The world may have been rushing to Hell in 2004, but the SFS and MTT made it through the November elections, the arts-funding broadside from Mayor Gavin Newsom, and a grueling European tour with notable aplomb. Their music certainly made it an easier ride for all of us. ▼

Laura Love's story

by Gregg Shapiro

Readers and music-lovers aren't often given the opportunity they're afforded with Laura Love's memoir *You Ain't Got No Easter Clothes* (Hyperion, \$23.95) and the CD of the same name (Koch). A longtime fixture on the folk and women's-music circuit, Love offers a powerful, revealing memoir of growing up in Nebraska in the '60s & '70s, where she struggled to main-

tain a childhood and adolescence in the midst of racial tensions and poverty. She was raised by a single mother who suffered from near-debilitating mental illness. While in the midst of writing the book, Love composed the accompanying songs on the disc.

Gregg Shapiro: In your book's introduction, you admit some of the stories may be difficult to read, and you "wrestled with thoughts of omitting them." Did you ever consider telling the story in a

novel form?

Laura Love: I did, but then I thought it would weaken it. I thought it was kind of a cop-out to say "my friend" had this little bout of animal abuse, or "my friend" was really mean to her boyfriend or her sister. It wasn't right.

You've always shared stories about your childhood between songs in your concerts. As someone who moves in the folk circuit, does that kind of sharing just come with the territory?

Yeah. I've heard a lot of folk performers do it. It didn't come naturally to me, because I was more of a write-in-the-abstract kind of person for a long time. Then things got so personal for me in the last four or five years, particularly with the Bush Administration in power. I have been so personally affronted and offended by his policies that I have become very personal in my songwriting. I wrote this book to put a name and a face to the kinds of people that he, and this Administration, would consider the dregs of society, the least among us. I



Love: 'Things got so personal.'

watched him cutting all of these programs that were my safety net and my lifeline, and it just galled me, because I know those pro-

grams absolutely save people.

When you tour, which you do extensively, are Lincoln and Omaha, Nebraska, on your tour schedule?

They haven't been. I never played Lincoln until three years ago, when I got an invitation to play downtown. It was such an amazing homecoming for me to see people I hadn't seen in 20 years. I'm making the Midwest more of a tour stop now. I was just flooded with love when I went back there and saw my home again. I love the plains of Nebraska, it's a beautiful state. Now reading about the tall grasses and the buffalo makes me long for it and appreciate it in ways I didn't then.

The book wraps up fairly swiftly, bringing the reader up-to-date. Do you plan to write a continuation of the memoir, about being a lesbian foster parent?

Yeah, I'd love to, I hope Hyperion gives me a chance. A follow-up would chronicle how I got to where I am today, which is lesbian foster mother — actually, adoptive mother, now. ▼

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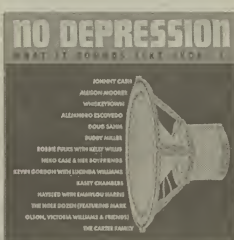
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Country kitsch'n

by Gregg Shapiro

As you might guess from their name, the members of Southern Culture on the Skids take a different approach to country music on *Mojo Box* (Yep Roc). Here's more country music with a difference.



Canadian insurgent-country goddess Neko Case appears on the various artists compilation *No Depression: What It Sounds Like [Vol. 1]* (Dualtone). Affiliated with the same-name Seattle-based publication, *No Depression* also features a collaboration between the late Johnny Cash and former members of Soundgarden, Alice In Chains and Nirvana. If that doesn't say insurgent, what does? Other contributors are Allison Moorer, Whiskeytown (featuring Ryan Adams), Buddy Miller, Hayseed with Emmylou Harris, Kevin Gordon with Lucinda Williams, and Robbie Fulks with Kelly Willis.

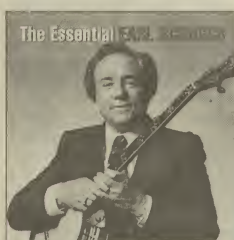
On her own, live CD, *The Tigers Have Spoken* (Anti-), Neko Case brought along some esteemed colleagues. You can make out Kelly Hogan on the Case/Sadies co-composition "If You Knew." The Sadies act as Case's backing band and keep the tunes a-twangin' with the help of Jon Rauhouse's pedal-steel perfection and fellow Canadian Carolyn Mark. A smattering of covers, including Loretta Lynn's "Rated X" and Buffy Saint-Marie's "Soulful Shade of Blue," sound lovely next to Case originals.

The "no depression" moniker comes from the Carter Family song "No Depression In Heaven."



The Unbroken Circle: The Musical Heritage of the Carter Family (Dualtone) is a various artists tribute to the legendary musical family, on which contemporary artists Sheryl Crow, Shawn Colvin, Emmylou Harris, and Rosanne Cash stand alongside George Jones, Willie Nelson, the late Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash to pay their respects.

Long-associated with the alt-country scene, Lambchop continues to expand its reach on the ambitious albums *Aw Cmon* and *No You Cmon* (both on Merge). Frontman Kurt Wagner's early-Tom-Waits-meets-late-Leonard-Cohen purr gives the songs bite and substance. Instrumentals reminiscent of Wilco's pop explorations are especially tasty, with or without mint jelly.



Banjo bonus

Contemporary country and bluegrass music owes a debt of gratitude to banjo-master Earl Scruggs. To hear his influential playing style, pick up the double-disc, 40-track anthology *The Essential Earl Scruggs* (Columbia/Legacy), which even includes "The Ballad of Jed Clampett." Also, check out the link to

"sausage man" Jimmy Dean on *The Best of Jimmy Dean* (Columbia/Legacy).

The insurgent country scene has afforded people in bands the chance to step outside one persona and into another. Take Blake Sennett of Rilo Kiley, and Jon Langford of The Mekons. Sennett dabbles in alternative country pop with his band The Elected on *Me First* (Sub Pop). Langford, who also keeps himself busy with his insurgent country outfit The Waco Brothers, stepped up and out with the solo effort *All the Fame of Lofy Deeds* (Bloodshot).

A founding member of the Be Good Tanyas, Jolie Holland, who sounds like she could be Erin McKeown's musical twin sister, has followed up her gorgeous 2003 debut *Catalpa* with the equally compelling *Escondida* (Anti-). The songs sound like something you might imagine an Appalachian family gathering around the radio to listen to during the Great Depression.

A friend whose musical taste I admire initially turned me on to Lori McKenna. Her new album *Bittertown* (Signature Sounds) sounds less about domesticity than it does about drama. McKenna's a Yankee, but she knows the value of twang and torch.

Contemporaries and rivals Elvis Costello and Graham Parker both released country albums in 2004, and even went so far as aligning themselves with country record labels. Costello & The Impostors' *Delivery Man* came out on Lost Highway, while Parker's *Your Country* was released on Bloodshot. While both are admirable excursions, neither release contains the most memorable work by either singer/songwriter.

Bobby Bare, Jr. is the son of a country music legend, so it's not surprising that music is in his blood. After some major-label attention for his band Bare Jr., he returned with Bobby Bare Jr.'s *Young Criminals' Starvation League* and the disc *From the End of Your Leash* (Bloodshot), which balances the raucous with the raw, and ends up sounding like The Replacements gone country. ▼

MUSIC

Exemplary pleasures

The best out on classical compact disc, 2004

by Tim Pfaff

For a classical-music lover living in Bangkok, CDs are a lifeline. More than once, I've wondered if the pleasure a CD has given me is because it's that good or because I'm that music-deprived. It turns out I'm not alone in thinking that, despite the industry's all-too-real problems, it has issued some exemplary recordings in 2004.

Topping my list is Karita Mattila's incantatory performance of *Grieg and Sibelius Songs* with orchestra (Warner Classics). With singing that aches and arcs, exalts and mystifies, Mattila puts her indelible stamp on this unaccountably neglected material.



Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, who cut her Handel teeth with Philharmonia, triumphed with *Handel Arias* (Avie). This CD represents Baroque singing at its most searching from a Handelian without equal. Music-making doesn't come more accomplished and affecting than hers.

Although it was an off-year for complete Handel operas, *Amor e gelosia* (Virgin), a set of duets by Patrizia Ciofi and Joyce Di Donato led by gay former Berkeleyan Alan Curtis and his Complesso Barocco, has become one of the year's surprise hits. The pair sings with such sharply defined character, refined musicianship, and sheer spunk, you keep going back for more.

Any lack of great Handel opera CDs was richly compensated by Paul McCreech's profound traversal of the great oratorio, *Saul* (Archiv). Keeping the drama to the fore, McCreech nevertheless delivers Handel playing and singing at its keenest, confirming his place as a top Handel specialist. Andreas Scholl's David is one for the ages.

It was an equally duff year for standard opera. Historically informed performances of music up to Mozart, on the other hand, burgeoned. René Jacobs recording of Scarlatti's *Griselda* (Harmonia Mundi) might have been the opera CD of the year, if Jacobs hadn't topped it with a period-instrument performance of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Harmonia Mundi) that digs deeper into the work and its psychological and political underpinnings than any previous recording, and buttresses it with playing and singing that speaks Mozart's language with unprecedented eloquence.

Perfect pair

For decades, the music press has isolated a small group of "perfect" opera recordings. Add two more in 2004. Just because Lully's *Roland* has not attained repertory status, and never will, doesn't make it any less major an opera, and the performance led by the enterprising gay French

Baroque specialist Christophe Rousset (Ambrosie) makes Lully's language immediate and engrossing, and the performance musically flawless down to the last singer and player.

A new French Baroque phenomenon, Emmanuelle Haïm, showed her considerable musical stuff (like Rousset, she is also a master harpsichordist) with two exemplary "firsts": the first great English opera, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, and an even better CD of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* (Virgin), the first great opera, period. Ian Bostridge, who seemed to be on every other CD released this year, gives by far the best interpretation of the title role ever recorded, and every last detail of Haïm's realization of the work is gripping.

Bostridge was a contender in a threeway race for best CD of Schubert's *Winterreise*. While his contribution was superb, the performance was soundly trumped

by the live performance by Matthias Goerne and Alfred Brendel (Decca). How an interpretation can pay such immaculate attention to detail without sacrificing drama or becoming downright fussy is a mystery. But their unwavering focus on the tragedy of obsessive love leading to madness places it among the all-time great recordings.

Recordings of Mahler's Second also sprouted like wildflowers, all of them worthy. But Claudio Abbado's interpretation, with his hand-picked Lucerne Festival Orchestra (DG), swept the field with a performance loaded with sharp detail, sweeping drama, and the requisite uplift. Pairing with an equally revelatory Debussy *La Mer* enhanced its value.

Another musician who seemed to pop up everywhere was the incomparable pianist Martha Argerich. Her moving, deeply personal Schumann Concerto shared the bill with a

Beethoven Triple Concerto (EMI) with longtime colleague Mischa Maisky and protégé Renaud Capuçon that restored the work to the importance it deserves.

Gay pianist Stephen Hough breathed new life into Rachmaninov's Four Piano Concertos and the Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini (Hyperion) with bracingly live, historically based interpretations. Andrew Manze's CD of Biber's *Rosary Sonatas* (Harmonia Mundi) was the highlight of the composer's tercentenary.

Yundi Li's astounding Liszt recital (DG), which included the magisterial Sonata in B Minor he played in SF, straddled the year change.

If the sign of a great recording is that it yields more with every hearing, Brad Mehldau's solo *Live in Tokyo* (Nonesuch) surely qualifies. The jazz titan is at the peak of his powers in one of the year's most rewarding CDs. ▼

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Best and worst on the lavender tube

by Victoria A. Brownworth

As the horrifying human tragedy in Indonesia and environs continues to play out after the Dec. 26 earthquake and tsunamis that overwhelmed that region, it may seem frivolous to deflect TV attention to other, seemingly less worthy images. TV records a range of human experience, our tragedies as well as our triumphs, the best in us as well as us at our most craven. As the dreadful events in the areas surrounding the epicenter of the 8.9 earthquake make clear, TV has an awesome power. Within an hour of that shocker, we knew about it worldwide. The global village is made that much more close-at-hand by TV.

International aid agencies have a monumental task at hand. Don't look at the pictures on TV and change the channel. Contribute to CARE or the International Red Cross, the world's best aid agencies in times like these. While

you're enjoying the fruits of your recent holidays, share a little with those whose tragedy has only just begun. TV shows us the pictures, but it's left to us to act.

Our best and worst picks for 2004 make clear what TV can, but often doesn't do. Oprah's trip to Africa was one of the best moments on daytime, while her car giveaway was among the worst. The gifties had to pay thousands in taxes on the cars, and many ended up having to sell them.

Our choice of best storyline for the year goes to ABC's soap *All My Children*, for catapulting the concerns of a lesbian character, Bianca Montgomery, played expertly and poignantly by Emmy nominee Eden Riegel, into the forefront of that top-rated soap. Bianca is a real character, fully fleshed out as a young woman with a panoply of issues,

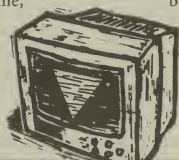
not the least of which was having her baby stolen from her. She finally gets Miranda back this week!

Bianca's storyline has often taken turns we haven't liked, but the soap has kept her on the front-burner for over three years now, and she's never once wavered in her commitment to being a lesbian.

Lesbianism is no phase for Bianca, even this season when the way sexy Ethan Ramsey breezed into town with his British accent and James Bond imitation down pat. He came on to her in a very romantic setting, and she care-

fully but firmly put him in his place by explaining she didn't bat for his wicket.

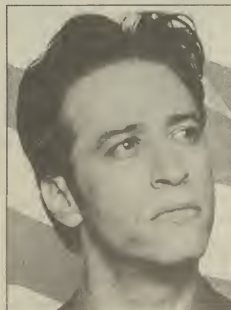
The storyline would never have worked as well without the fabulous Riegel to bring Bianca to life. She's another of our "bests" for the year. Riegel makes Bianca likable and believable, and brings the humanness of queers into straight households daily.



Lavender Tube

overindulging or restricting their children to the point where they are creating monsters: It's all there, it's all good, and it tells us more about the red and blue states than any map or voter count around.

Our pick for best reality show in '04 is CBS' *The Amazing Race*. Fast-paced and exciting, no bug-eating involved, this show takes viewers around the world in 40 days, showing us places and ways of being we would never see otherwise. Fabulous!



Jon Stewart: Best political jokes.

For the best comedy show on TV, Jon Stewart wins hands down. *The Daily Show* gives the best political commentary available in America today. Stewart is a genius. Period.

Wanda Sykes, no matter what she does, is America's funniest woman. Whether it's her stint on *Curb Your Enthusiasm* or her own reality show, *Wanda Does It*, or her various trips to nighttime talk shows, Sykes is hilarious. We love her.

We also love Jack Hanna's *Animal Adventures* (with *Animal Wise* by Julie Scardina). Hanna does more to explain and explore the concepts of animal and planet conservation in an hour than anyone on the globe. He's spent 30 years preaching environmentalism through action, and he's the best there is. (Scardina is pretty terrific, too.) Always linking the plight of animals to our own, always full of a childlike wonder at the beauty of animals and the spirit of their survival, he never fails to move us.

Now in its 25th year, ABC's *Nightline* has done more to educate the average American about politics and the world than any other TV show. In '04, *Nightline* took many risks, battling to show the dead from Iraq and the near-dead from Darfur and the all-but-forgotten in Congo, detailing the shattered lives of veterans of Iraq as well as the poverty-stricken in America. The program doesn't always live up to its potential, but its best shows are so much better than anything else out there.

Now in its final season, ABC's *NYPD Blue* lands on our best and worst lists. Dennis Franz's portrayal of Andy Sipowicz has never failed us: It's perfect, right down to the short-sleeved shirts. He's possibly the most fully realized character on any prime-time show, and it's clear why Franz has been a perpetual Emmy winner and nominee. Whenever we think this character can't find a new direction, Franz takes him another step forward. He is simply brilliant.

Unfortunately, *NYPD*, while breaking ground in a host of areas, including several key queer storylines over the years (including a current one involving the closeted new lieutenant), has never allowed one of its ensemble

players to gain a real foothold. Bill Brochtrup, a real-life queer, plays John Irvin, the PA in the squad-room. Beyond a few forays into the men's room to cut hair, or babysitting for Sipowicz's little boy, or catching a few criminals (gay, of course) while playing around with them, Brochtrup's character has never been allowed to break the simpering-queen mold. We have nothing against simpering queens, we love 'em. But we would prefer our stereotypes to have a bit more range. Even *Will & Grace*'s Jack gets moments outside the mold.

Worst moments

There are so many worsts on the tube, it's impossible to enumerate them all. But in '04, there were some so glaring, they demand comment.

The most egregious TV event this year was the **non-coverage of the war on Iraq**. It's difficult to imagine where the thousands of dead came from when we never saw them on TV. American soldiers, Iraqis of every stripe: where exactly was the footage of and explanation for (and outrage over) the dead? Shame on ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN & PBS for not doing more to bring the reality of the war into the living rooms of Americans. Perhaps if people were viewing the real war, polls wouldn't show they think George Bush is handling it well.

Another worst was the media-invented "scream" that jettisoned Howard Dean's soaring candidacy for President. Only ABC reported what happened: Dean's speech, given to a throng of supporters and campaign workers, had the sound filtered to reduce the background noise. So when Dean yelled, it appeared to be over the top. Watching Diane Sawyer play the unadulterated tape in which Dean's yell could barely be heard, vs. the edited version, was an education. But ABC was the only network willing to acknowledge its "doctoring" of Dr. Dean on a newscast. We don't subscribe to conspiracy theories, but if we did...

Another worst is CBS's continued savaging of veteran news anchor Dan Rather, who has anchored the news longer than anyone in broadcast history. We agree Rather may have let his own politics influence his ready acceptance of the allegedly forged documents regarding Bush's National Guard service. But the White House never disavowed the substance of those documents. It's dreadful to see the accolades being bestowed upon Tom Brokaw over at NBC while Rather is sent to Coventry. He deserves so much better.

We were also appalled by the craven acceptance of those utterly debunked **Swift Boat ads** by the networks. Only *Nightline* scrutinized the ads and took John O'Neill and others to task for their "work" on them and the damage they did to John Kerry's bid for the Presidency.

As we said, just a few of the worsts. No time to mention Fox programming, how much *Fear Factor* still repulses us, or how all the queer jokes on late-night talk make us think homophobia is still OK.

In the new year, we'd like to see more integrated programming on the tube: race, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity. We'd like to see news that doesn't have an agenda. We'd like to see reality programming that teaches something. Most of all, we'd like to see peace on Earth, goodwill to all. Stay tuned! ▼

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Lost and found

Our favorite new shows are no surprise. ABC caught the hat-trick this season: *Lost* offers the frisson of the early days of *The X-Files*. Superb plotting and equally superb acting by well-knowns and unknowns keeps the show intriguing week after week. We can't wait for the new season to start later this month.



Desperate Housewife Marcia Cross

Desperate Housewives (created by a conservative queer, believe it or not) is a fun, sexy romp that combines the best of *Dynasty*, *Melrose Place* and *Sex and the City*. The acting, writing and campiness are all grade-A.

Boston Legal proves David E. Kelley still has it. Rounding out the triumvirate, this ABC drama has a level of irony that is vintage Kelley. A spin-off of the once-fabulous *The Practice*, *BL* also has our pick for best couple on prime time: **James Spader** and **William Shatner**. It's sex, lies and *Star Trek* for a marriage made in some alternate-universe heaven. These two burn up the screen. Spader's dissipated sexiness and Shatner's wildness make Alan Shore and Denny Crane two characters we wait all week to watch. Shatner proves it's never too late to reinvent one's self, and Spader, well, he's simply dreamy.

Wait! ABC also gave us another super show this season in **Wife Swap**. More than just a guilty pleasure, *WS* has proved a stunning little investigation into how heterosexual America lives. It's not a pretty picture. Men still living in the Stone Age, where women are second-class citizens according to Biblical dictates; women still devoting their lives to housework, while holding down full-time jobs and getting no sleep; parents

BOOKS

Fixing a take on Paul Bowles

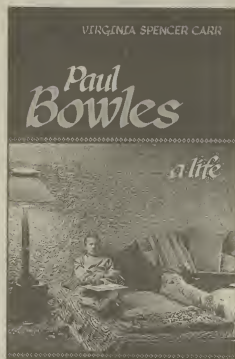
by Glen Helfand

Paul Bowles: A Life by Virginia Spencer Carr; Scribner, \$35

In the pantheon of American literary figures, Paul Bowles, most noted for his first novel *The Sheltering Sky*, towers. But his mythic persona is that of steely and stoic, a man who is always pictured alone on pillows in his Tangiers abode. "Distant, chilly, and eccentric" is how he was described in an article in an Alger newspaper in the late 1940s. Yet he was also a multitasking, adventurous expatriate who, in a pre-global age, traveled to exotic locales and lived what seems like a wild, kif-smoking, card-carrying Communist, bohemian life.

His marriage to writer Jane Bowles was unconventional, accommodating both of their bisexual inclinations. They, together and separately, befriended some of the most important intellectuals of the 20th century: Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas, Tennessee Williams, Gore Vidal, Ned Rorem, Virgil Thomson. And while Jane's emotional life was barely contained (it was the subject of a popular 1980 biography), Paul Bowles, who died at 88 in 1999, remained, quite purposefully, a cipher.

His new biography, *Paul Bowles: A Life*, doesn't completely penetrate his icy surface, though it does warm the veneer. Virginia Spencer Carr, who has also written a biography of Carson McCullers, offers more of a well-researched chronology than an illuminating tome, yet she treats Bowles, who isn't always sympathetic, with respect and equanimity.



He's such a controlled person, one whose autobiography, *Without Stopping*, offered little insight, that a little analysis and/or dishing seems required to make this required reading on Bowles. Carr, who knew the man for a decade before he died, seems to be a bit too reverent to take that tack.

Prank boy

Unlike many biographies, where the early days are the pages to skim, Carr's recounting of Bowles' childhood is perhaps the most revealing and surprising part of the book. It begins with a fabulously terse opening line: "Paul Bowles hated his father." Not surprisingly, he was much closer to his mother, who encouraged the use of his imagination and a Zen-like practice of emptying the mind. The young Bowles comes across as a solitary, devious, almost evil boy who played dark pranks with neighborhood kids and engaged in battles of the will with his grade-school teachers (he

usually won). He discovered Edgar Allan Poe early on, and the mysterious tone clearly had an influence on the stories Bowles wrote as a child.

Carr traces the narrative of Bowles' musical studies — his first successful career was as a composer — and though she offers too much information on his various commissions to score plays and movies, this aspect of his life also led to his first romantic attachment, to mentor Aaron Copland. This relationship, like many here, is treated cursorily. In commenting upon a Copland biography, Bowles told Carr, "One would never know from it that our relationship had ever been a sexual one. Until I'm dead, too, I would just as soon it stay that way." Trashy as it may seem, don't most of us look to bios for bedroom revelations?

Jane's entry into the scenario is more fleshed out, making it fairly clear that the pair were primarily intellectual and emotional companions rather than physical ones, as they often resided separately. One friend called the pair "more like brother and sister than man and wife." Here we learn more about Jane's string of female lovers than we ever do of Paul's. He formed various attachments with men from Mexico and North Africa, mostly semi-literate artists and writers, yet there's always a degree of hidden ambiguity to their relationships.

There's more vividness to the descriptions of his constant travels — the rough ocean voyages, violent illnesses and picaresque travelogues — as well as the process of writing his best-known books. Carr provides excerpts from the reviews of each publication, and

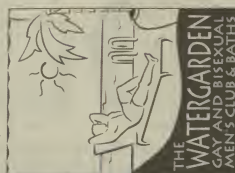
while Bowles sometimes seems prickly about them, it's never easy to interpret his responses.

Down time

Carr boasts in her introduction that she spent a fair amount of time with her subject. He stayed with her in Atlanta for three months while recuperating from a surgery — and the footnotes attest to numerous information-gathering conversations between the two of them. Yet the book itself doesn't reflect her direct relationship with her subject. A bit of "Bowles and I" would have been welcome. Instead, she employs a cool distance, going so far as to refer to herself repeatedly in the third person as "Bowles' biographer Virginia Spencer Carr."

That's a jarring tactic that occurs more frequently in the latter, more contemporary sections, which oddly are the sketchiest in the volume. People slip in and out of the picture, and it's never quite clear if they're manservants, drivers, companions or lovers. There's little sense of what daily life was like in the Bowles residence those latter days, when presumably Carr actually visited him.

Towards the end of the book, Carr includes a revealing quote from Bowles about autobiography: "It is clear that telling what happened does not necessarily make a good story. In my tale, for instance, there are no dramatic victories, because there was no struggle." It is a fitting description of this book, which is more fact than story. Perhaps a bit more struggle with her thoughts about Bowles the man may have resulted in a richer, more compelling portrait. ▼



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Ten years of great gay erotica

by Jim Nawrocki

Best Gay Erotica 2005 edited by Richard Labonté, selected by William J. Mann; Cleis Press, \$14.95

This year's edition of *Best Gay Erotica* marks the series' 10th anniversary (each volume is dated for the year going forward, though it contains selections from the previous year). According to Richard Labonté and William J. Mann, series editor and guest editor respectively, 2004 provided plenty of erotic writing, and for the most part, the offerings made it difficult for the editors to select some representative examples.

Within the crowded field of queer erotica anthologies, the *Best Gay Erotica* series seems to attract the most notable writers. JT Leroy, Kirk Read, Justin Chin, Michelle Tea, Pat Califia, Christopher Bram, Cecilia Tan, Felice Picano and a host of others have all contributed as writers or editors (or both) over the past decade.

This 10th anniversary edition represents William J. Mann's selections from 2004. For reasons not mentioned by Labonté or Mann, it is not a selection of the best of the last 10 years. Perhaps they were concerned with keeping the offerings current. Mann also notes a desire to ensure that erotica remains provocative, particularly because "ever since Janet Jackson's bustier busted out on

national television, the forces of reaction, championed by the Bushies, have been clamping down everywhere and anywhere they can."

Mann's political meditations aside, there's not much more going on between the covers of this anthology than a lot of writing designed to appeal to a broad array of sexual turn-ons. In an age where just about anything can be a fetish, these trusty erotica anthologies consistently manage to give voice to both the deviant and the "traditional," the soft and the not-so-soft.

One development that seems to have gained in popularity in recent years, at least with respect to erotic short stories, is the fusion of sex writing with other genres: erotic ghost stories, erotic science fiction, erotic humor, and so on. Drew Gummerson's "The Strange Chateau of Dr. Kruger" is one example in the current volume, a kind of campy, sexy take on the mad scientist motif. Simon Sheppard's "The Thanks You Get" offers a somewhat comical view of SM sex.

Across borders

There's also a stronger international presence and more writing about interracial sex. Teh-Chen Cheng's story "Yang-Qi" describes the clandestine rendezvous of two young gay lovers in rural China. The story is lush with imagery of bamboo grooves and other atmospheric details. Andy Quan's "Surf" is similarly atmospheric.

An excerpt from M.S. Hunter's *Voodoo Lust* details the "captivity" of a young Caucasian lad at the hands of some sexy men of color.

There are many familiar names in this collection. In addition to local boy Simon Sheppard and others, San Francisco's most well-known gay literary couple, Ian Philips and Greg Wharton, have co-authored the contribution "Kindled by Vowels (An Epistolary Seduction)." Taken from

Philips' popular *Satyriasis* series of distinctively literary erotic anthologies, "Kindled by Vowels" is distinguished by its vivid wordplay and almost prose-poem-like structure.

This collection, like most of its predecessors, offers priapic prose for every taste. For those who are looking for a little more than just sexy writing, there's ample charm and unique creativity in the latest *Best Gay Erotica*. ▼

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OUT & ABOUT



"Jayne Mansfield Dragonfly," by Carl Linkhart, part of "A Cocktail of Glamour and Anarchy" at Berkeley's Giorgi Gallery. See Saturday.

Calendare by Mark Mardon

Common assets

Among the people in my life who most influenced and inspired me in 2004 is a controversial young man who is not a member of our tribe, but who speaks for all humankind, and he has a few choice words to say. I know speaking "for humankind" sounds puffed up, but **Adam Werbach** has a certain license. As current executive director of the **Common Assets Defense Fund** (www.commonassets.org) and a member of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, he acts locally while thinking globally. As the 46th president of the **Sierra Club** at the age of 23, Adam acted globally, too. He and I had a mutual mentor and friend at the time, back in the early '90s — the grand wizard of the modern environmental movement, the late **David R. Brower** of Berkeley. Dave was magnificent in his 80s, a gray-haired eminence as impassioned as he had been in his youth as a World War II mountaineering hero. In following naturalist **John Muir's** footsteps, Brower reshaped a sleepy home-grown Sierra Club into a mighty activist organization. Dave showed me, Adam, and generations of environmentalists the meaning of optimism when it came to "saving the planet."

On December 8, 2005 at the **Commonwealth Club** on Market Street in San Francisco, Adam gave a speech that might have made Dave Brower turn in his grave — before he embraced its conclusions. Adam spoke of "The Death of Environmentalism," and I could just hear the rumblings in the stodgy old environmental groups for whom the message was fashioned. Adam's speech did more than sound the death knell of a movement that has proven unable to turn back the unstoppable industrial assault on our natural resources and quality of life.

In his speech, Adam said that the old assumptions that underlie modern environmentalism should die so that something new can be born. He argued for stepping out of an identity box, to start seeing the world more holistically rather than focusing narrowly on single issues. Why? Because all indicators of environmental health have turned downward, irrevocably. We can declare ourselves environmentalists, but that doesn't mean we can actually protect the environment.

Curiously, a similar sentiment was voiced by writer/activist **Larry Kramer** in a speech on November 2 in New York when he reportedly declared that "gay rights are officially dead." As a journalist for the gay press for the last several years, just as I was a journalist for the environmental press in a prior era, I've been afforded a bird's eye view of the "gay community," which is just as diverse and unmanageable as the folks who identify as environmentalists. More and more, operating exclusively in the narrow domain of the "gay community," as though it were somehow distinct and identifiable from society as a whole, our advocates focus on narrow problems and policies, rather than broad vision and values. Adam pointed out what this pinched approach has done for the environmental movement, and we can apply his lessons to our own situation. We don't stop fighting, but we step outside the box, embrace a progressive cause that includes all people, defending human, not just gay, rights. John Muir pointed out that all things are hitched. We aren't a minority; we are humanity itself. ▼

Fri 31

Scott Capurro @ Victoria Theater

Ring in the New Year with out funnyman, actor, playwright, and Fowl Play author Scott Capurro with special guest **Kitten on the Keys**. One of the hottest stand-ups in London today, Capurro is home for the holidays after shooting two British reality shows back to back. He's performed comedy in all English speaking countries, including San Francisco, the cultural oasis from where he hails, and Scotland, where English is barely spoken, and where he won the prestigious Perrier Award for his first one-person show, *Risk Gay*, at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. \$25. Doors 7:30; show 8pm. Victoria Theater, 16th St. near Mission. Info: www.ScottCapurro.com; Tix: www.tickets.com

Kinsey Sicks: Oy Vey in a Manger! @ NCTC

The Kinsey Sicks deploy their award-winning a cappella singing, biting wit and over-the-top drag in the global effort to stamp out holiday cheer. Now in its second year at NCTC, the show will premiere new songs and other holiday mischief not included in last year's production. "A gay holiday tradition, like turkey stuffing, dreidel spinning and crippling depression." Featuring Ben Schatz as "Rachel," Irwin Keller as "Winnie," Chris Dille as "Trampolina" and Jeff Manabat as "Trixie." \$25-\$35. New Year's Eve shows at 7:30pm & 10pm. NCTC, 25 Van Ness Ave. Tix/info: 415-861-8972; www.nctc.org

Beach Blanket Babylon @ Club Fugazi

Steve Silver's *Beach Blanket Babylon*, the nation's longest running musical revue, packed with hilarious spoofs of pop culture, spectacular costumes, outrageously gigantic hats and one show-stopping number after another rings in 2005 with two special New Year's Eve performances, at 7 & 10pm. \$60-\$180. Club Fugazi, 678 Beach Blanket Blvd. (Green St.). Tix: 415-421-4222.

Travesties & Dada Party @ The Ashby Stage, Berkeley

Dada New Year's Eve Party. Come see Shotgun's Season Finale, *Travesties*, then stay after the show for an evening of Dada art, music and merriment. Champagne and hors d'oeuvres included. *Travesties*, by Tom Stoppard, is set in Zurich, the time is 1918 and three men destined to become icons are in town at the same time: James Joyce, Tristan Tzara and Vladimir Lenin. *Travesties* is set in an era parallel to our own, where the world is in tangible chaos and the "world order" will be irrevocably changed by the actions of both ordinary and extraordinary people. \$35. Across street from Ashby BART. Tix: 510-841-6500; www.shotgunplayers.org

Dancin' On Top of the World @ Carnelian Room

BACW and NCLR Present SF's premier lesbian New Year's Eve party: *Dancin' On Top of the World* — An Evening of Elegance High Above the City. Disco All Night. DJ Nica plays Oldies, Disco, Funk, Dance, Hip Hop, Reggae, Salsa, Merengue. Gourmet Hors d'Oeuvres, Fabulous Desserts, Party Favors, Champagne Toast, Breathtaking Panoramic Views. Singles Mingle from 8:30-10pm hosted by the incomparable Rape, founder of Butch-Femme Socials and incoercible Matchmaker. \$100. 8:30pm-1:30am. Carnelian Room, 555 California Street, 52nd floor. Tix: www.bacw.org; www.nclrights.org

iClub Papi! & Latin Explosion @ New Bench + Bar, Oakland

DJ *Elitos* of *Pan Dulce* spins the best in Spanish, Hip Hop and House for "Ya Tu Sabes" — The 1st Annual New Year's Eve Ball, hosted by *Mahegony*. Complimentary amenities in the All Night Lounge (buffet, champagne w/Red Bull Splash; CD's to 1st 250 people; glow toyz). Live performance by *Speaker Freaks* ("San Francisco," "Internet Ho"). Featuring the sexy Men of *Extotica* and *The Papi Dancers*. Midnight balloon/money drop. \$20 (no passes). 9pm-3am. 21+ w/D. Info: 415-675-9763; 510-444-2267; clubpapi.com; bench-and-bar.com

Metropolis NYE 2005 @ *space 550

Celebrate the 20-year anniversary of Gus Presents with a super party featuring world-renowned DJs *Tom Moran*, *Roland Belmares*, and *Shokra vs. Nova*, plus the *Falcon Go-Go Stars*, and a free bonus after-party: "Adonis" at Club NV. \$40 adv; \$50

door (\$100 5-Party Weekend Pass includes "Underworld", "Mass SF" and "Sanctuary"). *space 550, located at 550 Barnwell at Industrial. Info/tix: guspresents.com

Spundae @ mezzanine

Spundae and mezzanine present a NYE 2005 dance spectacular with 12 hours of music magic featuring *Derrick Carter* of Chicago doing a classic 4-hr. sunrise set; *D-Fuse* performing a 3-hr. set including Midnight Ceremony; and tag-team DJs *Gianni vs. Taj*; *Scott Carrelli vs. Hoj*; and *Rooz vs. Alain Octavo*. \$25 gen'l; \$100 VIP. 8pm-8am. 21+ w/D.

1984 @ The Cat Club

Get dressed New Wave for 1984. SF's tribute to the New Wave/80's music. Two rooms of dancing with DJs *Melting Girl* and *Dangerous Dan* in the back room playing Synthpop, Goth and Industrial. Videos of Depeche Mode, The Smiths, Flock of Seagulls, Prince, Go-Go's, The Cure, and more. DJs *Damon* and *Jules* in the front room count down your favorites. Party favors aplenty. Prize packages for the "Best in 80's" dressed. Group efforts encouraged (dress up as *Duran Duran* or the *Go-Go's*, etc.). Champagne toast/balloon drop at midnight. \$15 adv; \$25 door (\$20 dressed New Wave). 9pm-4am. 21+ w/D. 1190 Folsom St. at 8th. Tix/info: www.1984sf.com

Resistance Lounge IV w/Aphrodesia @ El Rio

New Year's Eve with Aphrodesia: "Resistance Lounge IV: My New Year's Revolution." Spoken Words and Freestyle Rhythms. Resolve to nourish your grassroots. Explosive poets and guerrilla artists will guide you to Aphrodesia's conscious afro-funk. Taste the future with the toast of the underground. Spoken word, music, veggie hors d'oeuvres and more. Proceeds benefit Direct Action to Stop the War's (DASW's) efforts to create authentic democracy and combat empire at the local and global level. 21+ w/D. \$20-\$50 sliding (NOTAFLOF). 3158 Mission St. Info: 415-282-3325; actagainstwar.org; aphrodesia.org

Infuse: NYE

@ Paradise Lounge

Opel Productions presents *Infuse: NYE* — A Night to Inspire and Celebrate Core Values: Truth, Beauty, Love, Freedom, etc. Two rooms of music + VIP room w/ fireplace, plush decorations, couches, lounge seating, etc. Smoking section available; no drama w/ins or outs. Free appetizers & wine from 9-10pm. Free breakfast at 5am. Live feed visual mixing by *On the Fly Films*. MAIN ROOM DJs: 9-10:30 *Shanti* (Triple Power / Rhythm Society); 10:30-11:45 *Sunder* (Sol System); 11:45-1:00am *Ellen Ferrato* (2nd Sunday); 1:00-2:30 *Alibi* v. *Shizzler* (House of Lotus); 2:30-4:00 *Smooove* (Opel / Space Cowboys); 4:00-5:30 *Goldilox* (Bass Tax / Lush). After hours (party runs w/o interruption): 5:30-6:45 *Anthony Garlic* (Green Gorilla); 6:45-8:15 *M3* (Green Gorilla); 8:15-9:30 *Aaron Pope* (The Deep End); 9:30-11:00 *Kramer* (The Deep End); 11:00-12:30 (SPECIAL SECRET GUEST SPOT); 12:30-2am *Bali* (The Deep End). UPSTAIRS: 10:45pm-12am *Hoj* (Opel); *djhoj.com*; 12:00-1:15am *Syd Gris*; 1:15-2:30am *Dirthyertz* aka *Reza* (Loog / Pangea); 2:30-4:30am *Jondi & Spesh* (Loog / Qool / Spundae Recordings); 4:30-6:00 *Dragn'fly* (Love Tribe); 6-8am *Mike Giannini* v. *Sumil* (Percussion SF); 8-9:15am *Sattva* (Xplosion). \$35 adv. Paradise Lounge, 1501 Folsom @ 11th St. Tix/info: www.groovetickets.com; www.opelproductions.com

Juanita More!/Fag Fridays @ The Endup

Sound In The Future: Fag Fridays New Years Eve. Exclusive Sets by Honey Dijon of NYC & David Harness of SF. Open Bar 10-11pm! At midnight, *Juanita More!* and her *Morebros* ring in the New Year with an eye-popping show, balloon drop and champagne for all. Doors open 9:45pm; dance until break of day and beyond. The Endup, 401 Sixth St. at Harrison. 21+ w/D. Info: 415-263-4850; www.fagfridays.com; www.juanitamore.com

Fairy Butch NYE

@ Swedish American Hall

Fairy Butch New Year's Eve Party. For Gals & Transies of All Colors & Their Pals! Doors open 9pm; Show at 10pm. Note the Different Venue: The Swedish American Hall, 2174 Market St. at Church (Early Entry at 8pm; Hors d'oeuvres for Advance Registrants). Info: www.fairybutch.com

Veronica Lipgloss & The Evil Eyes @ Hemlock

Live punk rock with bands *Von Iva* and *Veronica Lipgloss & The Evil Eyes*, plus DJ Krew. \$10. 21+ w/D. 10pm. Hemlock,

1131 Polk at Post. Info: 415-923-0923.

TANTRA Punkadelik NYE @ SomArts Gallery

TANTRA Punkadelik NYE, an entrancing mix cutting-edge art and sounds. CHILL AND LIVE WORLD FUSION featuring *Abdullah* and *The Night Visitors* (Victor Torres, ancient woodwinds, oboe, sax; Sidiki Diallo, drums; Sean Mikityiya, guitar, electronics; Mike Clements, gongs; percussion; and Special Guest, the Ven. Geshe Thupten Phelgye, sacred Tibetan chanting and instruments); and *Lumin*, featuring Irina Mikhailova, vocals, percussion and electronics; Jeff Stot, Oud, Taampura, Saz; and Suzi Q. on percussion. Plus: *Saturnia* (Phoenix Family); *Afut* (Upinyah); and *Manx* (Inertia Labs). ARTISTS: Elektrik paintings and decor by *Punkadelik* (Lyon, France); 3D video pioneer *Dr. Paradise*; atmospheric visual sculpture by *Light Rhythm*; and fluoro paintings by *Dreamtime Designs*. TRANCE MUSIC by *Void* (Chemical Crew, Israel) live and DJ set; *Toxic* (Timecode, Parvati Records, Israel) live and DJ set; *Liam Shy* (Tantra/Nu); *KJ* (Tantra); and *Obu* (Bombay Power). \$35 presale, \$40 door, \$20 door after 3am. 10pm-8am. 18+ to enter, 21 to drink. SomArts Gallery, 934 Broadway St. Tix: Distractions (1552 Haight, SF), Celba (1364 Haight, SF) and Skills (2566a Telegraph, Berkeley); online at www.tantrasf.com. Info: 415-820-3201.

Lovemakers/Paradise Boys @ Cafe Du Nord

Live music with the Lovemakers and The Paradise Boys, plus DJ Jeffrodesiac. \$25. 9pm. 21+ w/D. Cafe Du Nord.

Soulive @ The Independent

Live music with Soulive. \$85. 8pm/9pm. 21+ w/D. (open bar). The Independent, 628 Divisadero. Info: 415-771-1420

Under the Stars NYE 2005 @ Lavende Lounge

"Under the Stars NYE 2005" Hosted by *Frenchy Le Freak*. DJs: *Andy Caldwell*, *Ben Doren*, *Ellen Ferrato*, *Michael Anthony*, *Frenchy Le Freak*, *Antonio*, *Sharon Buck* and *M3*. Plus live Acoustic Late Night Sneaky. Nouvelle cuisine hors d'oeuvres & buffet 7-11:30pm by chef *Jamie Lauren*. Visuals by *Galaxy 415*. Balloon drop at midnight. Party favors, Green Gorilla Lounge After-Hours (1:30am-7), \$75-\$85 adv; \$95 at door; \$50 after 11:30pm (if available). \$20 Green Gorilla Lounge only. Lavende Lounge, 1710 Mission St. at Duboce. Info: 415-864-5585; lavendesf.com. Tix: 866-468-3399; ticketweb.com

Sat 1

Cockettes Exhibit & Salon @ Giorgi Gallery, Berkeley

Opening reception: "A Cocktail of Glamour and Anarchy," a spectacular Cockettes photo/art exhibit, curated by original Cockette *Rumi Missabu*, featuring art works by Carl Linkhart, Bill Powers, Gustavo Wilmaral, Joshua Freiwald, Michael Johnstone, and David Faulk. Reading and book signing for *Pan Tent's* *Midnight at the Palace*, "Sweet Pam's" wonderful first-person living history of the '70s queer hippie performance troupe. Reception at 1pm; Salon at 2pm. Performance salons will be held every Sat. & Sun. (2-4pm) throughout January in conjunction with the exhibit, including such legends as cabaret composer, pianist *Scrumptiously Koldewyn* with *Amy Dondy* (Jan. 23) and singer *George Mofett* (Jan. 30). Dream artist Carl Linkhart plays records and vamps on Sat., Jan. 8, and a "Faerie Music/Magic/Healing Salon" hosted by *Mark Mardon* happens Sun., Jan. 9. Giorgi Gallery, 2911 Clarendon Ave, Berkeley. Info: www.sweetpam.com

Thrive @ The Center

1-3 pm: Thrive: coffee with plenty of open, strong, wonderful HIV+ people to hang out with. \$1 donation cups of coffee and occasional home baked goodies with all proceeds going to the Center. 1st and 3rd Saturdays at the LGBT Center, 1800 Market.

Sun 2

Significant Others @ NCTC

Final performance: *Alan S. Quismorio* directs *Significant Others*, five original plays by *Tam W. Kelly* that explore the kaleidoscope of gay male relationships, from young love blooming on the night of the prom in the school janitor's closet, to infidelity in a long-term relationship, to the bitter-sweet reunion of two former lovers tracing the history of their relationship. A collection of inspirational tales that investigate the complex dynamics of love, and how we construct the "rules" of our relationships. \$26. 2pm. New Conservatory Theatre Center, 25 Van Ness Ave. Tix/info: 415.861.8972; www.nctc.org

Outlook Video @ Comcast Channel 29

"Outlook," since 1987 the Bay Area's best LGBT video magazine. New episodes monthly. Featuring segments from around the City, Bay, State, Nation & World. Airs at 5pm on Comcast Channel 29 in SF. For



Ring in the 2005 New Year with Truth, Beauty, Love and Freedom as DJ Ellen Ferrato spins the house at Infuse: NYE — "A Night to Inspire and Celebrate Core Values." At the Paradise Lounge. See Friday.

info on airings in San Jose, Sacramento, Santa Cruz, East Bay & South Bay, or to find out more about Outlook, please visit OutlookVideo.org

Lunatique Fantastique + Cirque Du Somethin' @ The Marsh

The Marsh presents Lunatique Fantastique's *The Wrapping Paper Caper*, in which Liebe Wetzel and her puppetry troupe make wrapping paraphernalia come to life in a wild and wacky Bogart-esque detective story. Plus: *Cirque Du Somethin'* — in which the dynamic clown duo of Unique Derique and Moshe "YooWho" Cohen present a feast of frivolity, employing Ham-bone Body Drumming, circus skills, and physical comedy, with rubber chickens and other props. \$10-\$12 for *The Wrapping Paper Caper* (2pm); \$5-\$15 *Cirque Du Somethin'* (3:30pm). The Marsh, 1062 Valencia St. (btwn 21st/22nd). Tix: 415-826-5750; ticketweb.com. Info: www.themmarsh.org

K'vetsh

@ Sadie's Flying Elephant
"K'vetsh," the popular queer spoken word event and open mic held the first Sunday of every month. Hosted by Lynn Breedlove and Tara Jepsen. \$1-\$3 donation. 7:30pm sign-up (bring one piece of 5 minutes or less.); show 8pm. Sadie's Flying Elephant bar, 491 Potrero (corner of Mariposa).

Mon 3

A Night Of Blues @ Empire Plush Room

One Night Only: "A Night of Blues," featuring Bill Sims, Jr., Clinton Derricks-Carroll and Michael Keck, stars of Berkeley Rep's Musical, *Polk County* by Zora Neale Hurston (www.berkeleyrep.org). \$20 plus two beverage minimum. 21+ w/d. Will Call & seating begin 60 minutes prior to showtime. At 10 minutes prior to showtime, open seats may be released to guests on our wait list. Late arrivals will only be accommodated if open seats remain and there is an acceptable time during the performance at which to seat them. Empire Plush Room, York Hotel, 940 Sutter St.

Bambi Lake/Lit @ Canvas Gallery

"Lit at the Canvas" welcomes Bambi Lake, the unsinkable punk rock diva, who will read from her new chapbook. Plus open mic. Free. 7pm. Canvas Gallery, 9th Ave. at Lincoln.

Kielbasa @ The Rite Spot

Back by popular demand, your accordion playing auntie Kielbasa with her Holiday Extravaganza, "Dammii, Call it Christmas!" She offers skewered versions of holiday songs, pop tunes, TV themes and accordion standards you haven't heard since you were a kid in Milwaukee. Free. 8:30pm. 2099 Folsom St. at 17th St. Info: 415-552-6066.

Tue 4

Women's Aikido Class

All-Women's Aikido Class: "Heart of San Francisco Aikido," a lesbian-run dojo, is offering a beginning class for women. Aikido is a non-violent martial art whose guiding

principle is harmony and conflict resolution. Class starts Jan. 4 and runs for 8 weeks. \$85 for 16-class series. 6-7pm. Located at 2565 Third St. #309. Info/registration: www.heartaikido.com

Wed 5

Kundalini Yoga @ Lakeshore Baptist Church, Oakland

Kundalini Yoga Workshop begins today at an LGBT welcoming and affirming congregation. Resolve to feel better! All ages, fun, no pressure yoga. Wear loose clothing, bring a mat or towel, and an empty stomach. Beginners welcome. \$40 for 8-week session (10% benefits a Ugandan AIDS orphanage). 6:45pm. Lakeshore Ave. Baptist Church, 3534 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland. Info: 510-841-4339.

Surviving an Epidemic @ Main Library

Community Dialogue: "Surviving an Epidemic." An evening of reflection and dialogue for all those who have struggled during the HIV epidemic — long-term survivors, friends and partners, caregivers, those at risk. Where are we at this point in the epidemic? How do we make sense of what we have endured? What are the lessons that we can take forward? This will be a facilitated community dialogue open to all. Held in conjunction with the Hormel Center's exhibition: *Rattlesnake in a Moving Car: Life with HIV* — a visual/oral history of HIV survival created by Rob Anderson, artist and internationally known HIV spokesperson. Free. 6-7:45pm. Main Library, Lower Level, Latino/Hispanic Meeting Room, 100 Larkin St. (at Grove). Info: contact Lanz Lowen at 510-530-6875.

From 20 to 80 @ The Center

The older men's working group of the San Francisco Gay Men's Community Initiative presents: "From 20 to 80, Gay men growing older: A dialogue across the decades." A multigenerational forum comprised of professionals and other men from the community will discuss what inevitably happens to each of us. Panelists will include: John Land (Ph.D. Clinical Social Worker; director of New Leaf's outreach to elders program); Rik Isensee (LCSW Psychotherapist and author of *Are You Ready?* — *The Gay Man's Guide to Thriving at Midlife*). Moderators: Marlana and Ralph Hyman. Free. 7-9pm. LGBT Community Center, 4th Floor, 1800 Market St. at Octavia. Info: Joe Imbriani at 415-437-4695

Katastrophe, D/DC, JenRO @ Rickshaw Stop

Doors at 7:30, show at 8:30: Hip hop event feat. Katastrophe, D/DC, Dime Life Crooks and JenRO. Release event for Katastrophe's new CD. \$5. Rickshaw Stop, 155 Fell St. @ Van Ness Ave. Info: 415-861-2011; www.rickshawstop.com; www.katastrophe-ap.com

Thu 6

Radar Reading @ Main Library

Michelle Tea hosts the popular "Radar Reading" series for underground/emerging authors plus occasional superstars. Tonight: Trinie Dalton, Ian Phillips, Bucky Sinister and Carol Queen read from recent works.

Free. 6-7:30pm. Main Library, Lower Level, Latino/Hispanic Community Meeting Room, 100 Larkin St. (at Grove).

Sharon McNight's Cabaret 101

@ Michael's Octavia Lounge
Grand Opening: Michael's Octavia Lounge & Cabaret Showroom opens with "Cabaret 101" — An Introduction to Cabaret by Professor Sharon McNight, BA, MA, & BS, covering the history of Fanny's, Trinity Place, and Chez Jacques in an evening of song and dish, with Michael Grossman at the piano. \$20 cover w/ \$10 food or beverage minimum. 6-8pm. Also on Fri., Jan. 7, 14, & 21 at 9pm; Sat. Jan. 8, 15 & 22 at 9pm; and Sun., Jan. 9, 16 & 23 at 3pm (brunch served 10:30am-3pm). Located directly across Market St. from Martuni's.

Take Me Out

@ Golden Gate Theatre
Special Benefit Performance of *Take Me Out*, 2003 Tony Award winner for Best Play. A portion of each ticket will benefit Academy of Friends. The locker room will never be the same when a young baseball star at the top of his game calls a press conference and makes a shocking admission. Both funny and hard-hitting, *Take Me Out* chronicles the fallout as its ripples spread through the team, the media and across the nation. \$78 (includes \$3 service fee). 8pm. Tickets will be at will call. Tix/info: Elisabeth Loeffler at elloeffler@academyoffriends.org

Zeppelin Beach

@ Off Market Theater
C.A.F.E. Presents: "Zeppelin Beach," a monthly singing improv contest. Tonight's theme: "American Idol" meets "Improv Survivor." You make up words & melodies while a Master Musician follows along. Each song inspired by audience suggestions. In early rounds you sing with others on stage. If you make it to the final round you get a chance to show off your talents. \$10 to watch; \$5 to play! 8pm showtime. Off-Market Theater, 965 Mission at Fifth St. Tix/info: 415-896-6477; www.cafearts.com

Foreign Affairs

@ Get Lost Travel Books
Join Diane LeBow, Donna George Storey, Sage Vivant, and Opal Palmer Adisa as they read stories in the new collection, *Foreign Affairs: Erotic Travel Tales*, offering tales of lush, ripe sex in exotic international locales. Free. 7pm. 1825 Market St. (btwn Valencia/Guerrero). Info: 415-437-0529; cleisspress.com

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Hello, Moolaadé!

The rite stuff from Burkina Faso

by David Lamble

Moolaadé means sanctuary. In this latest film from one of the founders of Africa's modern cinema movement, 81-year old Ousmane Sembene, an independent woman takes in four young girls who are fleeing the practice of ritual female genital mutilation (referred to as "purification" throughout the film). This slow-moving but gracefully paced film takes time to define the terms of the conflict that breaks out between this proud, determined woman, Colle Ardo Gallo Sy (Fatoumata Coulibaly), and more traditionally-minded women and men in the small Burkina Faso village in West Africa.

We learn that Colle refused to have her own daughter "purified" seven years before, and her act of rebellion against a centuries-old tradition stirred up resentment among villagers who believe non-purified girls will be "Bilakoro," or unfit brides.

While coming down against the practice of genital mutilation as preserving the inferior status of women, director/writer Sembene is careful to let viewers draw their own conclusions, allowing us to see how the "purification" fits into the fabric of village life. All is governed by conservative Islamic religious principles, grafted onto longstanding customs that favor male rule. Sembene came to filmmaking after writing novels, wanting to work in a medium more accessible to his continent's largely illiterate population.

French letters

We see how dependent the villagers are on income sent back by men who have gone to work in France. A major set-piece is the welcome home ceremony for a young man whose success in Paris

has allowed him to return a conquering hero in a Western suit, with the desire to pick a bride from his village. Will this young man agree to marry a "Bilakoro?" The men and women observe a careful dance, neither wanting to directly confront the other. Suspicious men talk amongst themselves about the modern influences that seem to be corrupting women like Colle. "We must confiscate all their radios." The subtitles give a very earthy translation to the male dialogue, as when a disgruntled man accuses Colle of "wanting to shit all over my head." A gathering of

male elders jokes about whether it will be possible for a man to sustain an erection during the time it takes to break the spell of the Moolaadé.

Patient filmgoers will be rewarded with an astutely crafted story, told in the local language and punctuated by West African music, on how modern and ancient ways collide in a African village. It's the type of community Sembene sees as crucial to the revival of African prosperity and cultural survival. Will the power of the Moolaadé suffice to give the young girls under its protection a way to control their bodies? A



Moolaadé centers on the African ritual of female genital mutilation.

thrilling climax involving a public whipping and a large pile of seized radios will keep you guessing. As the villagers step over the cord

Colle has hung across her doorway to signify the Moolaadé, it's as if they are stepping through a portal into the future. *Opens Friday.* ▼

Top 10 gay films

◀ Arts cover

that is sexually liberated to the point of madness. (If you like *Bad Education*, you may also like *The Motorcycle Diaries*.)

Tarnation Jonathan Caouette used to grab the best drag he could lay his 11-year-old hands on and channel some fabulous damsel of his own invention. Twenty years later, Caouette's monologues are riveting and a little scary. Where did this man/child acquire both this B-movie sensibility and the moxie to pull out of his butt an homage to the latest horrible chapter in the life of his beloved mother?

Renee LeBlanc once seemed to have a bright future. A pretty girl, she attracted the attention of a fashion photographer. A fall off the roof of the family garage de-toured Renee into a series of Texas mental hospitals, where she was subjected to electric-shock therapy. After traveling through her own private cuckoo's nest, Renee returned home to Houston to bond with her male child, who himself had been stuck in a series



Filmmaker Jonathan Caouette (right) with his mother, Renee LeBlanc.

of abusive foster homes.

The ultimate home movie, culled from more than 160 hours of video, phone messages and bad TV, *Tarnation* is a stark portrayal of the coming of age of a gayboy artist, plus a passionate testament of that boy's love for his mother. (You may also like: *Father and Son*.)

Sideways Alexander Payne and co-writer Jim Taylor give an insidious homoerotic subtext to the travel plans of two middle-age men almost drowning in wine and women. They can't screw each other, but they will screw up all the lives they touch. Miles (an Oscar-worthy turn by Paul Giamatti) is a morose English teacher who has tied his remaining self-respect to the publication of a long autobiographical novel.

On the eve of what he fears will be the final rejection of his book, Miles joins former college buddy Jack (veteran TV actor Thomas Haden Church, brilliant in a comic role that 15 years ago would have been played by Nick Nolte) on a trip through the Santa Barbara wine country.

Giamatti, who got raves for his slump-shouldered portrayal of an underground cartoonist in *American Splendor*, now gives a more nuanced look at a man who's spent his life spitting in the wind. An adult comedy about male friendship (with parallels to queer midlife soap opera), as four people enjoy a gourmet meal with their wine, a buddy thinks to ask his sodden friend, "You didn't drink and dial? Don't go over to the dark side." (See also: *Door in the Floor*.)

Kinsey Perhaps the ultimate queer daddy, sex researcher Alfred Kinsey is movingly portrayed by Liam Neeson as a man struggling to be free of his own cold dominating father. Kinsey created

both a sex-history project that elucidates and unleashes the American libido, and an incestuous surrogate family among his Indiana University researchers.

The movie opens with Kinsey giving his sexual history to a trio of young assistants. It is the quietly charismatic Peter Sarsgaard as Clyde Martin, his smoldering green eyes hinting at the absurdity of the moment, who seduces the good doctor, producing one of the best man-to-man screen kisses since *Sunday Bloody Sunday*. (Funny Ha Ha or *The Good Lawyer's Wife*.)

The Aviator Few have sorted fact from hokum in the legend of Howard Hughes, so it's no knock against director Martin Scorsese, screenwriter John Logan and Leonardo DiCaprio's splendid collaboration to say that *The Aviator* is several movies in one. Many will find the first hour, spanning Hughes' obsession with the Hell's Angels and his messy but fascinating affair with Katharine Hepburn, to be the most amusing, sexy and awe-inspiring. Blanchett's Hepburn is an astute rendering. She dares to do

the "accent," and even those ever-so-slightly mannish touches that must have had Hughes wondering who already possessed the pants in this union.

This epic movie, as insightful as *The Godfather* trilogy on the confluence of money and power, is shrewd in its take on the obsessive/compulsive disorder that would reduce Hughes to the status of bearded recluse drinking his own urine. DiCaprio has figured out how to spoon out just enough of the bitter truth to keep the movie honest. The sight of a paranoid Hughes unable to leave a hotel men's room due to his fear of turning the germ-infested doorknob is a window into madness. (*Donnie Darko: The Director's Cut*.)

Million Dollar Baby At first, this powerful new film set in the world of female boxers from Clint Eastwood may auger a distaff version of *Rocky*, but *Million Dollar Baby* is not about winning a title. Like *Boys Don't Cry* and *Soldier's Girl*, the film offers queer viewers a tantalizing glimpse of a world where gender barriers disappear.

Just as her Brandon Teena became a tomboy's wet dream of the best little boy in the world, Hilary Swank is utterly convincing as a female boxer who knocks out every dame in her path. But rather than ring glory, the film's climax turns on a soul-searching test on the nature of love. The fight family learns, as many of us have since the onslaught of AIDS, how difficult it is to follow the referee's pre-fight instructions: to protect yourself at all times. (*The Sea Inside*.)

Dorian Blues This very smart comedy manages to combine sassy zingers about life in the family closet with an off-kilter coming-out story that's funny and uncomfortably accurate. A first-rate ensemble cast headed up by TV's Michael McMillian (effortlessly

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Leonardo DiCaprio plays obsessive/compulsive mogul Howard Hughes.

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I entered IML

A nightmare . . . or dream come true?

by Mister Marcus

I don't know if it takes a psychic or a dream interpreter to figure this one out, but last week on Monday and Tuesday, I had two consecutive dreams and both times, I woke up in a cold sweat.

Monday dream

Anyone who knows me will tell you that the last thing I would ever want to do is enter a leather contest. Thus there I was in a fantasy world embarking on becoming a contestant for International Mr. Leather 2005. I saw myself downloading the IML application and filling it out; writing a check for \$100 (the fee for unsponsored contestants), and taking it to the post office to mail it to IML headquarters in Chicago.

The next sequence saw me working out with a personal trainer to tone my ancient body, and preparing for May 2005. There was no need to re-read the contest books by Guy Baldwin and Jill Carter. I had read them many times and advised many a title seeker to read them both.

I felt little need (other than a quick review) to enhance my knowledge of all the previous winners of IML, IMSL, IM Drummer and IM Drummer boy and the subsequent ILS/b, ABW and other major title holder winners. I had a working knowledge of various clubs and web sites concerning the leather nation. Being in the news business, I was well aware of national and local legislation on matters concerning the LGBTQ communities.

Within two weeks after submitting my application, I was del-



In Omaha in August, Lori Ellison of New Mexico was chosen IMSL 2004. Pictured from left are Int'l Mr. Bootblack Alan Tunstall; Int'l MS Bootblack "Izzy", Lori, and IML Jason Hendrix.

ugged with emails and phone calls asking me one question: "Why are you doing this?" My answer was: "Because I felt like it." The few people I had confided in about my decision to run for the IML title just couldn't keep it a secret and you can imagine how the IML staff reacted when they opened the envelope with my application form and check!

Next I was in Washington, D.C. at the MAL weekend when the IML judges were announced. Of course, I knew them all and had judged or interacted to some degree with most of them when they had won their titles. The judges were announced: former IMLs Guy Baldwin and Joe Gallagher; former IMSLs Judy Tallwing McCarthy and Amy Marie Meek; former American Leather Man Dean Ogren; former SF Leather Daddy, Don Thompson; former Toronto

Leather Man eStevan de Castro; and Jacques Happe of Amsterdam; and the outgoing IML, Jason Hendrix. A formidable (and tough!) panel indeed!

Tuesday dream

I attended the usual circuit for an IML candidate. Attended ABW, and other city, regional and state contests and reported on them in the line of duty as a leather columnist.

Arriving in Chicago and getting into the swing of things, the contestant briefing was formidable, with Walter Klingler doing his faithful rendering of the rules, and the "secret" ritual that takes place among the contestants. Then came the Pecs and Personalities segment. I received gratifying applause I think mostly for my moxie in entering at my age! At every turn, IML attendees were asking me "Why?" I drew the Number 7 for order of appearance. A good sign? Who knows?

The interview the next morning was encouraging. Mostly about my personal goals, opinions on topics of the day, would my job permit travel, could I cover the expenses of travel — it was only 7 minutes and I knew there were many more questions the judges wanted to ask, but the time limitation (thankfully) left those questions unanswered.

Sunday morning: My group of 10 in the lineup were encouraging, helpful and sincere. The rehearsals were without incident. The stage crew was patient and as always very helpful.

The crowd filtered into the auditorium. While lingering in the lobby, more questions: "Why?"



Goddess Lakshimi, at left wearing a "Wuzzie" sash, passed the Ms. World Leather title to "Pandora" of Philadelphia. That's 1st runner-up Ultra Domme on the right, beaming for the camera.

EVENTURES IN LEATHER

Friday, December 31

New Year's Eve. Celebrations everywhere and especially the "Ties, Cuffs and Collars" party at the Powerhouse from 2100 to closing with a \$10 in advance/\$20 at the door donation to benefit the SFGSL Hustlers softball team. Don't miss this one!

Saturday, January 8

Gauntlet II Mr. Leather contest at that fabled bar tonight kicking off the Mr. Los Angeles Leather "season" and 8 more, possibly 9 more to go!

Weekend, January 14-16

Centaur MC "Leather Weekend" in Washington, DC when "Tug" Taylor steps aside to sash a successor. Registration form on www.leatherweekend.com for \$109 and after January 1st, it's \$125. Sun Bears Weekend in San Diego with a side

trip to Rosarita Beach in sunny Mexico and Mr. Bear San Diego 2005 contest. Email to: boyred69@yahoo.com.

Saturday, January 14

All women's play party at the Crucible in Washington, DC during MAL weekend. For info: www.the-crucible.com.

Mr. Oil Can Harry's Leather contest (#2 of 9) in Studio City. Winner competes at Mr. L.A. Leather in March.

Weekend, January 28-30

Mr. Chicago Leather Contest at the Touché Bar in the Windy City. Also, Flesh & Fantasy weekend in Dallas, TX. With the Mr. Texas Leather Contest and So. Central. Leather Sir/boy contests. Weekend pkg. is only \$25. For more info, surf to www.dallaseagle.com.

PORN

Best porn reissue

◀ Arts cover

loaded that night. Child, it was a stream queen's dream. Not wanting to stain the carpet of my bedroom, I didn't let a drop escape. He called me a good boy. So I learned to guzzle at the hands of a master.

Such a tasty initiation has left me more than a little partial to the sport of water. That's why I've always regretted the rarity of the full GS representation in erotic films.

In the AIDS era, WS has scared filmmakers. They've been concerned to a minor degree with health issues, mostly ignorable, and more so with legal issues. The Prurience Police are scandalized by WS, and quick to halt its depiction. Only after a harshly enforced draught of many years are we beginning to see it with any frequency in our films. These days, however, it's usually restrained to "on me, not in me."

That's why we're especially pleased

that Spunk Video has re-issued Jack Stone's trilogy *Wet*, *Wetter* and *Wettest*. These three movies are the piss-slit's greatest hits. Baby, nobody in these movies is pointin' Percy at the porcelain. Unless you mean the porcelain veneers. They're a chugfest all the way.

They're also extremely funkier than the cosmetic porn we're fed. Boys today are gym-built, pretty-faced, and publicly trimmed. Jack Stone's men couldn't be more different. There are some handsome faces and nice bodies among them. But they're mostly a motley crew. Random ages, fallen faces, and hairy balls are the standard. They've got strange tattoos and frequent PAs. The jockstraps they flood and boots they lick aren't new, out-of-the-box costume pieces, but grimy, slimy items with a long and, don't you know it, pungent personal history.

Gulp stream

Wet was made in 1992, and documents a party thrown in a suburban tract-house by members of New York's Golden Showers Association. Most of the time they crowd around the bathtub of a tiled bathroom, taking turns submerging each other with multiple streams of piss. Adding some



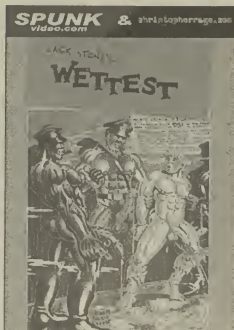
physical allure and change-of-pace activity that includes a sweet make-out and a surprise fisting are two porn-star guests. Young, tough Rick Valentine, with his streetwise attitude and punk, steam-shovel sideburns, roughs up Butch Taylor. A popular star of the late '80s, Butch was a California golden boy who disappeared into the S&M, fist-

ing underworld of New York. He joins the larger group in the garden, where more than the plants get watered, and smooches with Valentine during their private bedroom tryst, before Valentine rejoins the group for another thirst-quenching round in the bathroom.



Wetter is the trilogy's most accessible film. It was filmed in '94 at New York's famed Attic, which has a grimy john where cutie-boy James Silver debases himself before a couple of mean-spirited buddies, and a larger warehouse space where a friendlier group of

dudes is splash-splashing together. The two-story height of this room provides watersports' most classic, memorable moments, with a lineup of dudes pissing from high above onto a pair of open-mouthed lads kneeling on the floor below.



Wettest moved the party to the West Coast. It was filmed in '94 at Los Angeles' Club House. Like most sex clubs during off-hours, with the lights turned on and emptied of clientele, it's a forlorn environment. The performers' voices bounce hollowly off the concrete floor. Yet this is somehow appropriate for the movie's verbal abuse and S&M-flavored scenes of domination. The appropriately named Al Schvien stars. He's a raunchy 40ish dude with nicotine-stained teeth. There's a pig's tail tattooed on his ass, and a satyr with a raging hard-on is spread across his bicep. That's a real commitment of a tattoo.

Schvien meets the challenge. He degrades Mickey Squires for a quarter-hour, making him beg and grovel subserviently, and lick his piss from the floor. Squires never stops a foul-mouthed plea for more — an impressive amount of improvised dirty talk, even for the literate, creative Squires.

Cross currents

Two subsequent scenes occur concurrently. A particularly juicy pairing of slaveboy Cruz Lennox and master Scott Bennett presents two nipple-freaks who work their hugely distended nips while the piss is sprayed and gargled. Meanwhile, an unusual scene occurs at the bar. Schvien regales heavily mustachioed Roger Hart with tales of his piss-exploits with some biker-boys, while the mounting aroused Hart applies a double pair

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Mister Marcus

◀ previous page

I fled backstage and prepared for the entrance. Renslow's welcoming speech. Greetings from dignitaries. And since I was a contestant, they chose former American Leather Man Scott Reikofski to read the list of the top 20. He read the list and each lucky man stepped forward, #18, #19, and finally #20! I made the cut! The sweating was almost over. The entire class of 2005 was encouraging and congratulatory.

The leather image went off okay, the physique part was better than expected, and my 90-second speech centered on goals we should all strive for.

Finally, after the other speeches, the special presentations to the LA&M and the tally masters frantically punching in numbers on their calculators — the moment of truth arrived. We all hugged each other before going onstage. Lots of brotherly love and camaraderie in the group, as always. The winner was from Chicago. The 2nd runner-up was from

Montana. And guess what? I was the 1st runner-up!

The applause was mostly for the winner. Chicago had never won the title and finally, here it was, a hometown boy elevated to stardom.

Hey, it was a dream and one I hope I never have again! In fact I have no aspirations to become International Mr. Leather. Leather has ruled my life since a year after I came out. But for those of you who would covet having the title, dream on, make it a reality or make an honorable showing when you enter. They say, "a dream is a wish your heart makes." That may be true for many, but for me it was just a dream. And no, it wasn't a nightmare.

Mama Mia! Back to reality

All of Mama's "elves" from coast to coast gathered some 4,600 toys for kids and some \$21,573 in cash donations for a total estimated at \$51,473!

Mama says: "After Dec. 25th, I don't want to see another toy — until next year!"

Parties galore were happening all last week; one of the best was

the one thrown on Sunday, Dec. 19 at the home of Tony Bowser and Victor Torres (those daredevils from MOD-SF). What a blast that one was!

The other one was an unannounced, spur-of-the-moment thing, but a certain leather bar owner left town for a vacation without paying his staff and no money for liquor deliveries so the staff put together a \$20 a head party, recouped their pay and paid the liquor bill. Is this any way to run a bar? Inquiring minds need/want to know!

The recalcitrant 2005 *SoMa Bare Chest Calendar* men who were balking at being auctioned off on Sunday, Jan. 9 at the Eagle have reconsidered their stance now that the Ayatollah of the Calendar has been "reassigned" to another position. And he was being paid for all this aggravation? Tsk-Tsk.

Hope you have a wonderful weekend welcoming in the New Year and remember to pick a "designated driver" if you're partying in high gear!

See you all next year — 2005, the Year of the Cock! ▼



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The well-tempered revolution

Bach for the modern piano on two new CDs

by Tim Pfaff

At the change of a year of historic messiness, it's comforting to turn to some of the most orderly music ever composed. Bach's *Wohltemperierte Klavier*, a work that demonstrated that a keyboard instrument could be taken through a cycle of all the keys with a single, normalized tuning, caused a revolution that has changed all keyboard music since. But far from being a polemical exercise, it's music of soaring imagination, and it's become one of the best-known, most-loved works in the literature. Many who go to hear it played have also played it, adding another level of difficulty for public performers.

Two new recordings, both on the modern piano, underscore how different any two performances of the 24 preludes and fugues will be. Till Fellner's (ECM New Series) deploys the most sensitive of touches in exploring the work's complexities, producing some of the most beautiful sounds I've ever heard in the piece, without for a moment taking his attention off the music's ever-fascinating architecture. Daniel Barenboim's (Warner Classics) more assertive approach — enough so to count as a near-polar opposite to Fellner's — is no less attuned to the substance of the piece, but seems even more determined to show that it not only works on the

modern piano but is heard to best advantage there.

Ironically, it's Fellner who makes that case more convincingly. The essential delicacy of his playing makes the stronger impression, but it's informed with a sense of power held in check. When big sounds and brisk tempos are needed, they're there, but never ostentatiously. Every cleanly articulated note of the long work boasts an almost eerily apt sonority, befitting the work of an intense young pianist whose most recent concert splash was with the Liszt Sonata. His complex, saturated sound is deeply focused.

Fellner's playing exudes a confidence that comes only from deep, complete mastery of a score. Rather than preaching (a great temptation with these canonic works), Fellner shares his knowledge in the most intimate reading of the work I know. He revels in the immense variety of forms Bach uses in the preludes, and his attention to the working out of the often-unorthodox fugues is as transfixing. Just as Bach's sense of invention and Fellner's concentration never falter, neither does the listener's attention want to stray.

I was knocked out by his C-Minor Prelude, a difficult piece not to make clatter. But Fellner first gets the listener attuned to its clear pedal-point, then, once grounded, drives the piece to a pitch of nearly unbearable tension. The languorous E-flat minor



Pianist Till Fellner deploys the most sensitive of touches in exploring Bach.

Prelude seems suspended in air, its syncopated rhythms and writhing ornaments keeping it spinning, burrowing its way ever deeper into some emotional core. Listen for Fellner's version in the soundtrack of a movie near you soon.

What matters most in Fellner's interpretation is the sense of the cycle's inexorable progress. Each of its pieces is spellbinding on its own, and each seems overtaken in importance by the next. Add to that the extraordinary range of keyboard color and the shimmering, ethereal tone Fellner can conjure, and you have the kind of musical adventure the work was in-

tended to be. Its mighty culmination in the enormity of the B-minor Prelude and Fugue is as satisfying as it is earned.

Rain check

For Bay Area audiences who missed Barenboim's recital of the *Well-Tempered* he had to cancel, his new set gives a clear idea of what would have been. By comparison with Fellner's, it's a cacophony of counterpoint, superfi-

cially exciting on its own terms but ultimately unsatisfying.

I've long counted Barenboim among the most important pianists of our time, to the point of often regretting the extent to which he has forsaken the keyboard for the baton, where his work has been less reliable. Not surprisingly, in this performance he mines the modern grand for the orchestral effects of which it is capable.

"The most important part of piano-playing," he writes in his program note, "is the symphonic element." In keeping with that questionable assertion, he gives a deep-into-the-keys reading that makes you sit up, often in alarm.

Take, by comparison, his percussive reading of the C-minor Prelude. It builds to a clamorous, overwhelming, superficially impressive climax. But it's noisy and sounds on the verge of losing control. He achieves the "three-dimensional element" he strives for in this music, which he's played from his earliest days. But it's a hollow achievement, entirely inapt for this repertoire. There's an unavoidable sense that he's not just playing the work but rebuffing the historical-performance-practice pansies. With his ill-tempered clavier, Bach is the loser. ▼



Brother to Brother brings major figures of the Harlem Renaissance to life.

Top 10 gay films

◀ page 36

going from sweet, gangly and naive to angry and bitter in a great comic *tour de force* makes the jokes pay off and sting. The core of the piece is a nifty gay brother/straight brother bond against one of the most vividly depicted homophobic dads. (*A Home at the End of the World*.)

The Woodsman In this taut drama by first-time director Nicole Kassell, Kevin Bacon's Walter emerges into the light after 12 years in prison for having sex with underage girls. Bacon ably keeps Walter on that fine line between a damaged man who may have turned a corner, and a self-deluded man lying to himself and others.

Rap artist Mos Def steals his scenes as a cop who keeps tabs on Walter. Def's acute use of silences to pace his raging monologues increases the tension and underscores the film's employment of minority actors to portray the community that will judge Walter's fitness to remain a free man. (*Osama*.)

Brother to Brother A film that showcases a smart, gifted, beautiful black gay man as its present-day protagonist; invokes memories of James Baldwin; and brings to life major figures of the Harlem Renaissance is a coup for any film-

maker, but it's especially impressive as a first-time feature for director Rodney Evans.

Perry (Anthony Mackie quietly sizzles) is a college student whose sexuality makes him the target of black homophobia in an African American Studies class. The key to the film is a crossing-the-generations dialogue between Perry and a mysterious older man who slides through the film like a literary ghost. Bruce Nugent's writing and friendship with Langston Hughes give us an unusual window on the past. (*Baaddasssss*.)

Sugar This bittersweet coming-of-age film is based on stories by Toronto bad-boy filmmaker Bruce LaBruce. The first image is of an angelic-looking young man, Cliff, sucking on a piece of red licorice. Many who see *Sugar* will do so after hearing about the accidental death of the young actor who played Cliff, 25-year-old Andre Noble. Noble's Cliff tugs at your heart with tears shed after a spanking by a john, and more seriously after he is raped by a hunky hustler he has a crush on.

At the end of *Sugar*, Cliff stares at an open casket at the body of the hustler. His kid sister sobs, "It's just not fair." In what will now seem a cruel irony, Noble as Cliff comforts the girl. Then he walks off in his first and last starring screen role, heading towards his character's adult future and his own tragically limited horizon. (See also: *Harry and Max*.) ▼

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Old friends, new faces

by Sweet Lips

Now that Club Rendez-Vous has closed its doors at 1312 Polk St., leaving another toothy gap in our gay bar history and in that stretch of Polkstrasse between Bush and Pine, you can find the very personable "Rachel" working kitty-corner across the street at Kimo's, 1351 Polk St., under the stellar direction of Charlie. Check with Charlie or whomever to find out when Rachel walks the plank.

Yes, there will be a new Club Rendez-Vous on Polk, but I can't reveal the new location (don't want to upset any plans), but knowing David Kapp, it will be a big hit when it opens.

Seems the Circle J Club is still wanking strong after all these years. It's at 289 Ellis St., and you'll find that great guy "Jerry" still on duty there.

Say, Eddie Bellpepper, wasn't it great to see "Max," formerly of the Cinch staff, with Brad the other day? Brad is now holding court at the Badlands in Palm Springs, Monday-Wednesday, and I understand he is as popular there as he

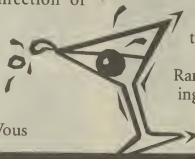
was here.

The Twin Peaks Saloon will be a great place to ring in the New Year. Michael Valdez makes you feel so warm and cozy — and that's on his side of the bar! You should see him when he gets off shift!

Make your New Year's resolutions now, and try to keep them. Ya hear me, Ronny Lynn? I want to thank my caregiver "Steve" for making my house look so festive this season.

Dick Deemer and Ramón send their greetings from Puerto Vallarta, and don't we all wish we could be down there with them, enjoying the fine warm weather?

Hope you all saw the great photo of the BAR staff in last issue. Photographer Caesar Alexander did an outstanding job! Unfortunately I had another party to go to that night, so you didn't get to see my smiling face — even though I still manage to get this column together after all these many years! Nevertheless, I'm full of holiday cheer — so here's to all my readers and our family and friends, hoping you all find happiness and have a great, gay New Year! ▼



Cocktail Hour

Best porn reissue

◀ page 39

of tit-clamps to his nipples, a Crisco-ed buttplug to his ass, and a parachute with weights to his balls. But it's the words that finally get the guys off, in an excitingly-edited crescendo of action that's intercut with the climaxes of Lennox and Hart. *Wettest* is greasy, dirty, slimy and definitely not for the casual viewer. But with its emphasis on verbal sexuality, played against some particularly sleazy physical action, it's a pretty unique film.

All three movies have been excellently remastered for DVD by Spunk Video co-owner Gary Carlton. Spunk's a new outfit. I appreciate these reissues, and the Christopher Rage back catalogue they're releasing, as well as the new and unusually raw fisting movies by Wolfgang Bang that Spunk is producing under the Red Eagle brand. But reviewing their films presents a bit of a dilemma. I've refused to review barebacking

movies. But what about safer-sex movies from a company that also presents bareback fare? Several larger companies swore some time ago they'd never knowingly employ a performer who made bareback fare. But other companies, Spunk and Raging Stallion among them, are two-stepping around this, offering a variety of rationales which basically come down to: the performers take responsibility for themselves. Do I refuse to watch Bo Knight in mainstream work because he's barebacked (with his boyfriend) for Spunk? Should I boycott Spunk for furthering bareback fare along with stuff like the *Wet* trilogy and Mr. Bang's rude but condomed capers? I'd sure like to hear readers' opinions. I need some guidance.

One thing I do know. Although I write a wrap-up only once a year, I hope players will continue to wrap it up themselves all year. Please be sensible. Wear a condom when you fuck. ▼

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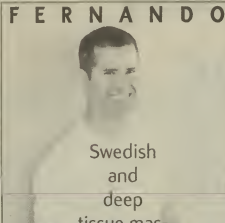
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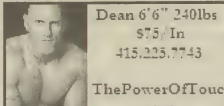
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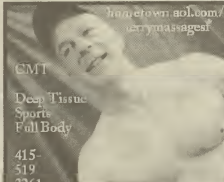


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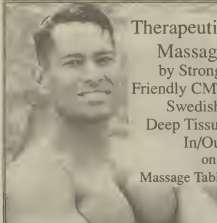
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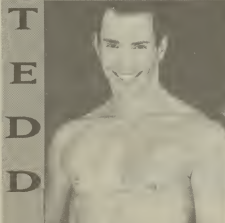
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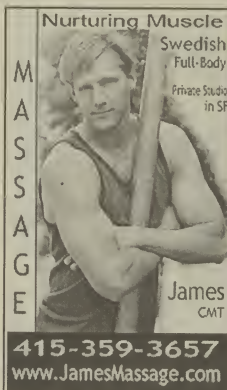
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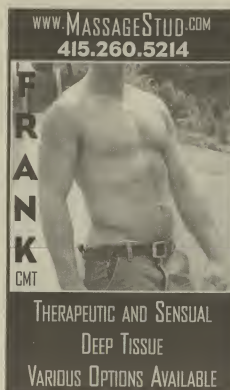


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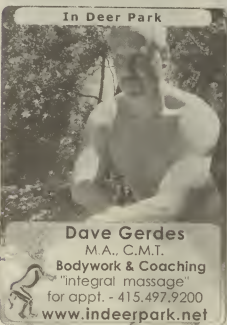
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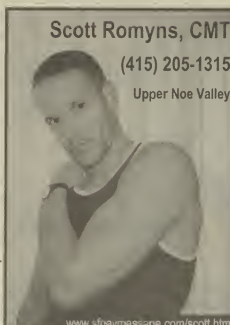
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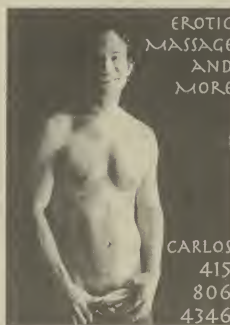
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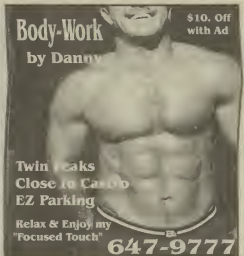
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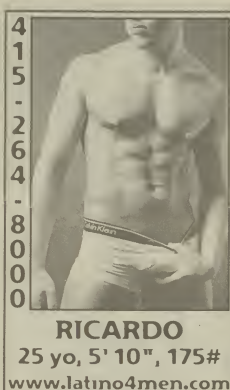
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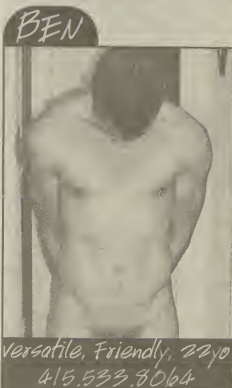
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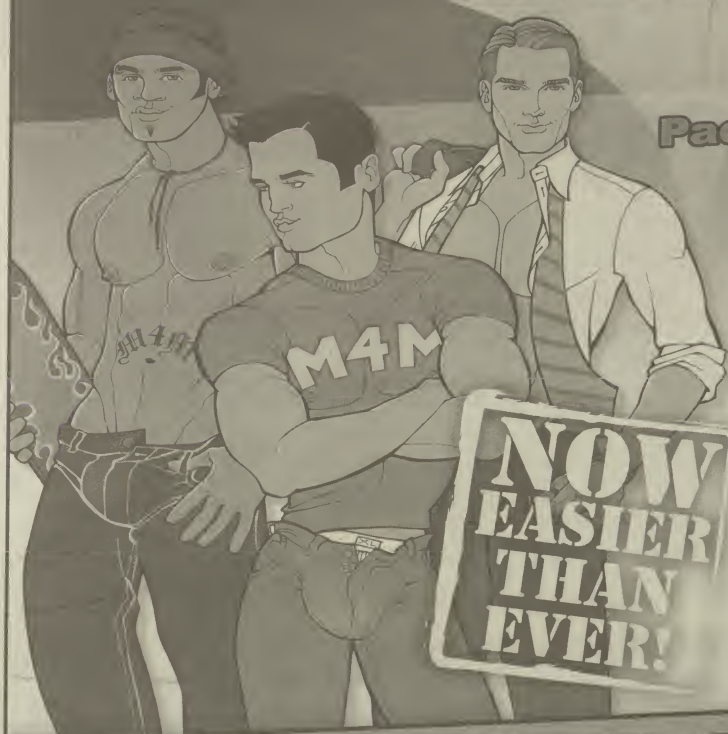
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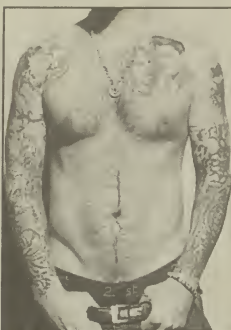
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